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THE CHILD'S BOOK OF ENGLAND

SIDNEY DARK'S BOOKS

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HISTORY

THE GLORY THAT IS FRANCE
THE CHILD'S BOOK OF FRANCE
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BIOGRAPHY

THE LIFE OF SIR ARTHUR PEARSON

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ST. GEORGE FOR MERRIE ENGLAND

Bartolommeo Vivarini

[*Frontispiece*

THE CHILD'S BOOK OF ENGLAND

BY
SIDNEY DARK
AUTHOR OF
"THE CHILD'S BOOK OF FRANCE"

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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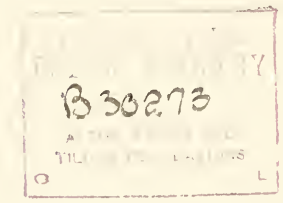
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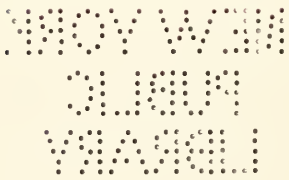
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TO

PAMELA AND ASHLEY,
DICKIE, MARK AND VALLIE,
AND ALL THE OTHER CHILDREN
WHO READ THIS BOOK

My Dears,

Last year I wrote a book for you called *The Child's Book of France*, and some of you told me that you liked it very much: so this year I have written *The Child's Book of England* for you. Perhaps, since you are English children, I ought to have written *The Child's Book of England* first. Before you start reading my book, I want to tell you that it is not meant to be a lesson book. I have tried to tell you the story of our country, and I hope you will find the story interesting and that you will want to have it read to you in the evenings from the first page to the last. Of course, I have told you about kings and queens and wars and battles, but I have also told you about the ordinary English people, and I have tried to show how splendid these ordinary English men and women have often been, so that you may be glad that you are English too.

TO MY READERS

You can be glad that you are English without being so silly as to think that the English are any better than the other peoples of the world. And you will find it easier to understand how foolish this would be when you read in my book from how many different races we English people are descended. Indeed this England of ours has been made great by people who have come from many different countries.

When I wrote *The Child's Book of France*, I told you that I meant it to be a Peace book, because I believe that the more we know about other nations the less danger there is of quarrels and wars. *The Child's Book of England* is a peace book too. You must first know all about your own country and love your own country before you can understand other countries. You must begin by being good English men and women before you can become what are called good citizens of the world.

As I have written chapter after chapter of the story of England I have felt more and more pleased that I am English. I hope you will feel pleased, too, when you read the story.

Yours affectionately,

SIDNEY DARK.

August 1922.

TO

FATHERS AND MOTHERS,
UNCLES AND AUNTS,
AND ALL OTHER PERSONS
OF GOOD INTENT

THIS is not a lesson book. If it is anything at all, it is a story book, a book which boys and girls will read for fun. I am quite sure that history can be read without tears, and if *The Child's Book of England* is found dull by the small people for whom it is written, this will not prove that history is dull, but that I have failed in the task that I have attempted.

All the histories of England specially written for children, that I have read, are either entirely devoted to the doings of over-praised kings and queens or are so hopelessly prejudiced that the facts are distorted. Charles Dickens's *Child's History of England* is, for example, written from the first page to the last with a Victorian Radical's hatred of kings, and a Victorian Protestant's hatred of priests, and

I hardly know another book calculated to convey so many false impressions. I do not, of course, claim to have written without my own partialities.

This is necessarily a short book and there are many omissions, and I am conscious that I may have failed to explain clearly some of the developments of government. All I claim for *The Child's Book of England* is that it has been written with the sole idea of persuading English children that they are the heirs of a magnificent heritage.

SIDNEY DARK.

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THE ANCIENT BRITONS

Hippolyte Coutan

[*To face page* 1

THE CHILD'S BOOK OF ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

THE BRITONS AND THE ROMANS

When I started to tell the story of France for English children I said that "the landing of Cæsar and his Roman soldiers on the English coast is the real beginning of our island story." Cæsar was the great Roman general who in the year 58 B.C. led his armies out of Italy into France, the country which the Romans called Gaul, and in a few years conquered the whole country. When Cæsar reached the north coast of France and looked across the water which we call the English Channel, and caught sight of our white cliffs through the haze, he naturally thought that he would like to conquer this island of Britain as well as the country of Gaul. The Romans had often

heard of Britain, which, I expect you know, used to be the name of England. Merchants had sent their ships from the Mediterranean to sell goods to the islanders and to buy tin from them in return. To the Romans, Britain was " the end of the earth," and Cæsar thought that if he could only add Britain to the other Roman possessions the whole world would be his. So in the years 54 B.C. and 55 B.C. he sent ships filled with Roman soldiers across the Channel. They landed on the south coast and marched a few miles inland, but on neither occasion did they stay very long, and Cæsar was too busy ever to attempt the real conquest of the whole island.

It was nearly a hundred years later when a Roman army of forty thousand men landed in Kent and marched towards London. They crossed the Thames, invaded Essex and captured the town of Colchester. Then the Roman army was divided into three parts and set about conquering the whole of England. From time to time, other armies were sent from Rome, and by about the year A.D. 80 (which, perhaps you know, means eighty years after the birth of Christ) the whole of

England and a small part of Scotland belonged to the Romans and was a part of the Roman Empire, just as Australia and Canada are nowadays parts of the British Empire. It was not until another century passed that the Romans were able to hold Britain without any fighting. But peace came at last. The Romans built a wall, which was called Hadrian's Wall, from the river Tyne to the Solway Firth (you should look at your map to see exactly where this is) to prevent the people who lived in Scotland from marching into England and stealing the cattle and burning the villages, and then for two hundred years the British people lived quietly and prosperously under Roman rule.

These British people who were living in our island when the Romans came belonged to the race of men called Celts, some of whom still live in Wales and Cornwall, in the north of Scotland and in the south and the west of Ireland. Before the Romans came, these Celtic Britons were divided into tribes who were constantly quarrelling and fighting with each other. They lived in huts made of

wicker-work, in villages surrounded by walls of earth. They dyed their bodies with a blue dye called woad, and they were very much like the savages who live nowadays in central and western Africa. A Roman writer said of the ancient Britons :

"They dwell upon barren, uncultivated mountains, or in desert, marshy plains, where they have neither walls nor towns nor manured fields, but feed upon the milk of their flocks or what they get by hunting and wild fruits. They live naked and their chief employment is thieving. They fight in chariots and their horses are small but swift; they are accustomed to fatigue, hunger and cold and can live for several days without food."

Our country was a very different place in those days to the England that we know and love so well. A large part of the country was covered by thick forests through which it was very hard to pass. When you take a railway journey from London to any of the seaside towns in Sussex, you will notice, if you look out of the train window, that, a little while after you have left London, you pass through a range of high hills, that you then travel for

some time through flat country, and that you then come to another line of hills which we call the South Downs. The flat country is called the Weald, and at the time of the Romans, and for many, many years afterwards, the whole of this Weald was one great forest, full of dangerous wild animals, and through which it was very difficult to pass. There were many other forests equally dense in other parts of the country.

The priests of the ancient Britons were called Druids, and you can still find the ruins of an ancient Druidical temple at Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain. The Druids used to sacrifice human beings to their gods, and the whole religion was very savage and cruel. The Druids were poets as well as priests, and they made the people's songs. It is interesting for us to know that the Britons regarded the mistletoe as a sacred plant, and this was the beginning of the custom that we still have of decorating our houses with mistletoe at Christmas-time. Every age leaves something behind for the people who come afterwards; sometimes it is something very important; at other times it is just a pretty custom,

but even these customs are links between us and the people who lived in our country hundreds and hundreds of years ago, and they help us to realise our connection with them.

You will easily understand that the Britons, most of them naked or almost naked, divided into tribes who hated each other, and knowing nothing about military discipline or the best ways of fighting, did not have much chance against the Roman soldiers with their heavy armour and splendid swords and spears, who had been taught to obey their officers and to stand by each other during a battle, and who had learned all about fighting in many wars in France and in Spain and in Northern Africa and in other parts of the world. Still, when you remember that, as I have told you, it took the Romans over a hundred years to conquer Britain, you will realise that the Britons had plenty of courage and that they were not at all willing to accept the Romans for their masters. There was often peace for quite a long time, and the Romans then believed that there would be no more fighting and that the island was theirs. Then suddenly the fighting

began again, and many more men were killed before the Romans succeeded in breaking the British resistance. The most famous of these rebellions against the Roman power was led by the British queen Boadicea, whose statue you can see on the Thames Embankment in London, about twenty years after the Romans began their conquest. Boadicea was the queen of Norfolk. When her husband died, the Romans attempted to capture his country. They brutally whipped Boadicea and they stole the possessions of the chiefs of her people. This enraged not only the people of Norfolk, but the people of the neighbouring counties, and the men living in Suffolk and Essex and Kent hurried to join Boadicea and the men of Norfolk in their fight against the Romans and their attempt to drive them out of the country. Boadicea and her troops burnt the Roman town of Colchester and many Roman military camps, and it is said that they killed over seventy thousand Roman soldiers and Britons who remained friendly to Rome. At last, however, the Roman Governor of Britain succeeded in gathering together a large army, and he defeated Boadicea in a great battle

which probably took place near King's Cross, in London. Thousands of Britons were killed in the fight, and when Boadicea found that she had lost the battle, she poisoned herself.

Now, although the Britons often fought against the Romans, and although in these fights many of them were killed and many others lost all they had possessed, it was really a splendid thing both for the Britons, themselves, and for the country, which is now ours, that the Roman emperors had thought of sending their soldiers across the English Channel and of making Britain into a Roman province. I expect you will find it rather hard to understand this, for, generally, it is a very bad thing when the people of one country march out of their own land into another country and force the people to whom the other country belongs to accept their will and to obey their orders. The splendid thing about the Romans was that when they had conquered a new country they did not make the people of that country their slaves; they made them Roman citizens with exactly the same rights and privileges as the people who lived in the city of Rome possessed. Sometimes after they had won a

battle, the Roman soldiers treated the Britons very cruelly, but more often they treated them very kindly. They said to them : " You are Britons, which means that you are savages with no laws and no roads, living miserable lives and constantly quarrelling with each other. We will make you Roman citizens, members of the great European family, and you will find yourselves living the lives of happy civilised men." Wherever the Romans went they made roads. In England they built a great road from London to the north, and another great road, which is still in existence and which we call the Bath Road, from London to the west. They built a third road right across England from Lancashire almost to Kent, and another road across the middle of England from east to west. Roman soldiers, of course, marched along these roads from camp to camp, but the Britons went along the roads, too, from village to village, selling and buying and finding out far more about their neighbours than they could ever have known before the Romans built the roads. Merchants, too, came from France and Italy and travelled far into the interior of Britain, and the Briton,

who had been living a narrow life in a distant island far away, as it seemed on the edge of the world, found himself, thanks to the Romans, a member of the great European family, or, as he would have said, a citizen of the Roman Empire. I should like you to know that once at least in our history the English have followed the splendid example of the Romans. A little more than twenty years ago, the English fought a war against a people called the Boers who live in South Africa. When they had conquered the Boers they made them British citizens, and to-day the Dominion of South Africa, in which most of the people are Boers, whose language is Dutch and not English, is a free country, forming part of the British Empire, and its people have all the rights that are possessed by the English-speaking people in the Dominions of Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Besides making roads the Romans gave the Britons laws. I think you will understand that it is impossible for people to live together happily unless there are laws to protect quiet, peaceful people and to punish evil-doers. The Romans were as famous for their laws as they

were for their roads, and in every part of the Roman Empire men knew that their lives and their property were safe. You can imagine what a change this was for the Britons, who had not known when the people of the next tribe would attack their village, burn their houses and kill their wives and children. When the Romans had firmly established themselves in Britain, they taught the Britons the use of money, they helped the people to build temples and courts of justice and comfortable houses, and they established schools to which the chiefs of the people were invited to send their sons. And it was from the Romans that the Britons first learned the truths of the Christian religion. For many years after the death of Christ, the Roman Emperors attempted to stamp out the Christian religion and cruelly persecuted the Christians both in Rome and in other parts of the empire. I am sure you have been told how the Christians hid themselves in the Catacombs in Rome, and how, when they were caught, they were killed by lions in the Roman Colosseum while the emperors and their friends sat and watched the cruel sight. But despite all they could do,

the emperors entirely failed to stamp out the new religion. Missionaries travelled from one part of the Roman Empire to another, and every year more and more people professed and called themselves Christians. Christianity was first taught in Britain by St. Joseph of Arimathea, the disciple who took Our Lord's body from the Cross, who came to Britain and built a church at Glastonbury in Somersetshire. A hundred years afterwards there were so many Christians in this country that an order came from Rome that all the churches should be destroyed, and about this time the first British martyr was put to death. He was called St. Alban, and the cathedral of St. Albans reminds us of his splendid courage. Among the Christians in Britain at this time was a lady called Helena, who was born at Colchester and who afterwards married a Roman emperor and became the mother of Constantine the Great. We always remember the name of Constantine the Great because, when he became emperor, he made up his mind that not only must the persecution of the Christians come to an end, but that Christianity should be the religion of the whole Roman Empire. Thanks

to his mother, Constantine was himself a Christian, and this was the reason why he came to this decision. It was a wonderful thing for the world when the great Roman Empire accepted Christianity, and I am sure you will feel proud to know that this wonderful thing happened through the influence of a lady who was born in your country. After the conversion of Constantine the Great there were no more persecutions in Britain, and the Britons sent out missionaries to convert other countries. One of these missionaries was called St. Ninian and he went to Scotland. Another and more famous man was St. Patrick, who went from Wales to preach in Ireland. Ireland was, however, largely Christian long before St. Patrick went there, and indeed, in earlier days, Irish missionaries had journeyed across the Irish Channel and had preached Christianity in various places in the north of England.

By the beginning of the fifth century, which means about four hundred years after the death of Christ, Britain had become a prosperous and happy country with good roads, laws which everyone obeyed, and trade with foreign countries many miles away. The savage Druid

religion had been destroyed, and most of the people had become Christian. Many of the Britons went to other parts of the Roman Empire and were appointed to high positions by the Roman governors. In the towns most of the people spoke Latin, and so did the educated people in the country. In certain parts of the country, particularly in what is now the county of Warwickshire, there were very few inhabitants, and while a large number of people lived on the coasts of Kent and Sussex, the Weald, about which I have already told you, was still nothing but dense uninhabited forest. The Romans had helped the Britons to build many large towns and cities; among them were London, Colchester, Lincoln, York, Gloucester, St. Albans, Leicester, Exeter, Dorchester, Winchester and Canterbury. The Britons sold to other countries wheat, wool from their sheep, lead from their mines in Somerset, Flintshire and Derbyshire, iron from mines in Sussex and Gloucestershire, and tin from the mines in Cornwall.

While Britain was gradually growing civilised and prosperous with the help of the Romans, it was constantly necessary to protect

her shores, as well as the boundary line between Britain and Scotland, against foreign invaders. Sometimes it was the Scots who had to be driven back across Hadrian's Wall. Sometimes it was the Irish who had to be prevented from landing from their boats on the western shores of Britain. Sometimes pirates, who had sailed from what is now the north coast of Germany, had to be beaten back from the eastern shores. In order that Britain should be properly protected, the Romans had to keep quite a large army in the country. Some of the soldiers in this army were British, and others had come to Britain from the different countries in the Roman Empire: some from France, some from Spain, and so on. But they all spoke Latin and they all were Roman citizens.

At the beginning of the fifth century, the Roman Empire began to grow weaker and weaker, and, as the empire grew weaker, the peoples in the countries outside the empire, whom the Romans called barbarians, crossed the borders and fought and often defeated the Roman armies. After a time these barbarians began to threaten Rome itself, and you will

understand that, with Rome in danger, it was impossible for the Roman emperors to give much thought to the safety of the far-away province of Britain, and it was impossible for them to send any fresh soldiers to strengthen the Roman armies that were already in Britain. Indeed, it was found necessary to take away some of the soldiers in Britain that they might fight in other parts of the Roman Empire. Before this happened, a number of men who had come from the north of Germany had been permitted to settle in certain places on the British shores. Now try and understand what happened next. For many years the Britons had become accustomed to look to the Romans for help and leadership whenever there was any danger. The Romans had now so many difficulties of their own that they were no longer able to help the Britons, and just at this time the Picts, a wild, savage people who lived in Scotland, made a league with the Irish and began to attack the western coasts of Britain and to make inroads in the north across Hadrian's Wall. The Britons first turned for aid to the men from Germany, who were called Saxons and who had settled in a few places on

the coast, and then they hired other barbarians who lived across the North Sea on the peninsula of Jutland, the place which has given its name to the greatest sea battle fought in the course of the Great War. These men of Jutland agreed to come and fight for the Britons against the Picts and the Irish, and a band of them, led by two chiefs called Hengest and Horsa, landed near the town of Ramsgate in the year 449. These men were called Angles, and it is from them that our country England —Angle land, or the land of the Angles—gets its name. The Angles and the Saxons were soon able to defeat the Picts and the Irish and to drive them back to their own country, but they found Britain such a pleasant country that they made up their minds to stay here and never to go back to their own homes. They sent word across the sea to their friends and invited them to come and join them. The Britons were of course unwilling to give up their country without a fight. Many of them had served in the Roman army, and many old Roman soldiers, who were not British by birth, had settled in the towns and villages. An army was collected to oppose the

new invaders, and a battle was fought at a place called Aylesford on the river Medway. The chieftain Horsa was killed in this battle, but the Britons were totally defeated. The richer Britons fled across the English Channel to France, but the poorer people were captured and either killed or made slaves. These Angles were not Christians and had no respect for the Christian religion. They burnt down churches and murdered the priests at the altar. But the Britons struggled on. Although more and more recruits came from Germany, it took the Angles six years to conquer Kent, and it was over a hundred years before the Britons were entirely defeated. Thousands and thousands of them were killed. Many of them escaped to Cornwall and the mountains of Wales, where they retained their own language and their Christian faith. Many of them went on living in England as the slaves of their conquerors. But these Saxons and Angles never broke the spirit of the people who had learned civilisation from the Romans. To them their conquerors were always "barbarians, hateful to God and man." We always like to think that courage is the great quality of the people

who live in our country, and it is good for us to know that these Britons who lived in England so many hundreds of years ago were as brave and determined as any of the peoples who have followed them.

CHAPTER II

ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

At the beginning of the sixth century, that is, about five hundred years after the birth of Christ, the Angles and the Saxons had firmly established themselves in this country, and, as I told you in the last chapter, the Britons were being gradually driven westward into Cornwall and Wales. But the Britons were not an easy people to conquer. You will remember how stubbornly they fought against the Romans, and they fought equally stubbornly against the Angles and the Saxons, and in this new struggle they were doubtless inspired by the fact that they were a Christian people fighting against heathens. The most famous leader of the Britons in the struggle against their new enemies was King Arthur, who, for years, waged a successful war against the Saxons, defeated them in several battles, and was at last betrayed into the hands of his enemies by

ST. AUGUSTINE PREACHING TO THE SAXONS

Stephen B. Carlill

[*To face page* 21

his wife and one of his kinsmen. That is really all we know about King Arthur, but there are some splendid stories told about him which I hope you will read, one of these days, in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* and in old Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. I am afraid you will find Sir Thomas Malory rather hard to read for some years to come, but he has a splendid story to tell of King Arthur and Sir Lancelot and the beautiful Guinevere and Merlin the magician. King Arthur had a number of brave friends, who feasted with him every day at a Round Table, and whose great ambition it was to discover the Holy Grail. This was the name given to the dish used by Our Lord at the Last Supper. It is said that this dish was used by Joseph of Arimathea to collect the Blood that flowed from Christ on the Cross, and that Joseph afterwards brought the dish to England, where it was lost. It was believed that the dish would be found again one day by a perfectly sinless knight. The fact that King Arthur and his knights sat at a Round Table shows that they were all equal, and from this we learn that there can be no difference in rank between brave men banded

together for an unselfish purpose. The stories of King Arthur were first repeated by British bards, hiding from the Angles and the Saxons in the hills of Wales. Afterwards, the Saxons heard the stories and, since they were brave men too, they loved them and repeated them, and years afterwards, when the Normans came to England, they learned the stories from the Saxons. So all the peoples who settled in our country and helped to make this England of ours, learned from King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table what a fine thing it is to be brave and honourable and unselfish.

When the fifth century ended, practically the whole of England was occupied by people who had come from the north coast of Germany. There were men called Jutes in Kent. There were Saxons in Sussex and Hampshire and Essex. There were Angles in Norfolk, in Suffolk and Lincolnshire and Yorkshire and Durham and Northumberland. The middle part of England was occupied by men belonging to various of these North German races, and the Britons were still in the west. The Anglo-Saxons, as we will now call these peoples, divided the country into seven kingdoms which

they called the Heptarchy, and the whole of the civilisation which Rome had brought to Britain, the law, the books and the religion, disappeared except among a remnant of the Britons. The Anglo-Saxons worshipped many gods; among them were Woden, the father of all the gods, Thor, the god of thunder, and Eostra, the goddess of the dawn. They did not believe that men lived in another world after they had finished their lives in this world, and they thought that everyone was in the hand of fate that "hurries men blindly along the paths she marks for them." The Anglo-Saxon tribes who settled in England frequently fought against each other, as well as against the Britons, and the men and women who were made prisoners in these fights became the slaves of their conquerors. It was these slaves who did all the work of the country. They ploughed the land and looked after the sheep and the goats and the oxen. The Anglo-Saxons loved freedom. They chose their own kings and chiefs, and, from time to time, they had meetings of the warriors, who decided what laws should be made for the people to obey. But though they loved freedom for themselves,

they did not want other people to be free and they did not in the least mind making slaves of the Britons. In the same way, hundreds of years later, the white people, who lived in the southern part of the United States, and who were free citizens of a free republic, had negro slaves who worked for them in the cotton fields.

I want you again to try and picture your country, this time just before the year A.D. 600. The Britons were only to be found now in Cumberland and Wales and Cornwall, the rest of the country was inhabited by Anglo-Saxons, most of them people with fair hair and blue eyes who worshipped strange gods, read no books, tilled the land by means of slaves, and were almost entirely cut off from the continent of Europe, of which, during the time of the Romans, Britain had formed an important part. A few years before A.D. 600, the Saxon King of Kent married the daughter of the King of Paris. This lady was a Christian, and she brought a Christian bishop with her when she came from France to live with her husband at Canterbury. This Christian bishop was permitted by the King of Kent to use the ruined

church of St. Martin which the Britons had built and the Anglo-Saxons had almost entirely destroyed. When he had been in England a little while, the bishop wrote to the Pope in Rome and asked that missionaries should be sent to England to convert the Anglo-Saxons. At this time, the Pope was a great and good man called Gregory the Great, and he was very much interested when he received the letter from Canterbury. Years before, when he was a young priest, Gregory had seen a number of fair-haired, blue-eyed young men being offered as slaves in the market-place at Rome. "From what country do these slaves come?" he asked. "They are Angles from Angleland," said the slave-dealers. "Not Angles but angels with faces so angel-like," said Gregory. He had never forgotten these Angles that he had seen in the slave-market, and, as soon as he had read the letter from the Bishop of Canterbury, he sent for Augustine, who was the Abbot of the monastery of St. Andrew, and told him to go with a number of his monks to England to preach the Gospel to the Anglo-Saxon people. Augustine landed in Kent in the year 597 at exactly the same spot at which Hengest and

Horsa had landed a hundred years before. The King of Kent received him, and Augustine preached a long sermon to him. When the sermon had been translated, the King said: "Your words are fair, but they are new and of doubtful meaning." However, the monks were allowed to go into Canterbury, and they entered the town in procession, carrying a silver cross and a picture of Our Lord, and singing an anthem. I want you very much to try and understand how important this arrival of St. Augustine was. Before the Romans came to Britain, it was an out-of-the-way island and its people had practically no relations with the people who lived in France and Spain and the countries on the continent of Europe. The Romans made Britain part of the Roman Empire and thus joined them on to the Continent, and it was through the Romans that Britain became Christian like the rest of Europe. When the Romans went away and the Anglo-Saxons conquered the country, our island was once more cut off from the Continent, and when St. Augustine and his monks went in procession through the streets of Canterbury, singing a Christian anthem, they once again brought

Britain, which we will now call by its Anglo-Saxon name, England, back into the family of European nations. A year after Augustine landed in Kent the King of Kent was baptised as a Christian. Most of his people followed his example and thousands of them were baptised in the river Swale. Soon the other Anglo-Saxon tribes followed the example of the men of Kent, and gradually the whole of England became Christian once again. This did not happen, however, for a good many years and, during the struggle between heathens and Christianity, many battles were fought and many men were killed. At one time, the Roman monks who had come to Canterbury lost heart, but the work of conversion was gallantly carried on in the north of England by priests and monks who came from Ireland. At one time, indeed, it seemed as if there would be two Christian Churches in the country, quarrelling with each other and hindering each other's work, but, fortunately, this was prevented at a meeting of priests and bishops held at the town of Whitby in Yorkshire in the year 664, at which the Christian Church in England was divided into bishoprics, all of them subject to

the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is interesting to know that this unity was brought about by a Greek monk called Theodore, who was born in Tarsus, the city of St. Paul, and was sent by the Pope to be Archbishop of Canterbury.

Despite the fact that the Anglo-Saxons had become Christians, the different little kingdoms went on quarrelling and fighting with each other. This fighting was more continuous in the south than in the north. While men were fighting in Hampshire and Wiltshire and the midland counties, they were building schools in Northumberland, and it was in Northumberland, towards the end of the seventh century, that the first really English author was busy writing his books. He was a monk called the Venerable Bede, and he lived in the town of Jarrow, writing all manner of books for use in schools and, among other things, translating the Gospel of St. John into English. It is also interesting that, soon after most of the English had become Christians, English monks travelled to foreign countries to teach Christianity to other heathen peoples. Among these monks was St. Boniface, who was the first Christian

missionary to cross the river Rhine and preach Christianity in the country that we now call Germany.

Before Anglo-Saxon England became one nation, the King of that part of the country called Mercia, demanded very heavy taxes from the people who lived in the town of Coventry. His wife, who was called Godiva, asked the King not to compel the people of Coventry to pay the taxes, and he said that he would let them off if Godiva would ride naked through the town. She was so sorry for the poor people that she accepted the terms. The people of Coventry were, of course, very grateful to the kind Queen and they all went indoors and put the shutters up in their windows during her ride. But one man, who was a tailor, peeped through a chink in his shutters. For this, it is said that he was struck blind, and he has ever since been known as Peeping Tom.

We have seen how the Romans and the Anglo-Saxons invaded our island. Now we come to a third invasion, the invasion of the Danes. These Danes came from Norway. They were splendid, courageous sailors, but

they were also savage pirates and, wherever they landed on the coasts of a country, they burnt the houses and the churches and murdered men, women and children. The Danes landed in England about the year 800. They sailed up the Thames and plundered London and, at the same time, they landed on the coast of Devonshire and joined with the Britons in an attack on the English (you will remember that the Anglo-Saxons have now become the English) in that part of the country. It was partly owing to these attacks that the English at last decided that it was foolish to divide the country into a number of little kingdoms and that it would be far better to have one kingdom and one king. So in the year 828 the Kingdom of England was created, and Egbert, the King of Wessex, became the first King of the English. Egbert defeated the Danes and the British in a great battle, and his son defeated them again, and at last the pirates sailed away and for a few years there was peace in the country.

Unhappily, the Danes soon came back again. In the year 866 they landed on the coast of Norfolk and captured the city of York. Wherever they went, they burnt and destroyed, and

it was during this invasion that an English martyr, St. Edmund, was bound to a tree by the Danes and shot to death with arrows. Peterborough and Ely were burned and many of the Christian monks were killed. The whole of eastern England was soon in the hands of the pirates, and it seemed that once more our country was to be the prey of the barbarians and that its civilisation and its religion were once more to be destroyed. But in this hour of danger a great man arose to save the people. His name was Alfred. We know him as Alfred the Great. He was born at the town of Wantage in the year 848. When he was twenty-two, Alfred fought nine battles against the Danes. Sometimes he was beaten, sometimes he won, but, whatever happened, he went on fighting and he was determined never to leave off until the Danes were driven out of the country. In the year 878 he was forced to retreat to Athelney, and, while he was there, hiding from the Danes, he took refuge in a cowherd's cottage. The cowherd's wife bade him look after some cakes that she was baking, while she went away, and when she came back and found the cakes had been burned,

she threw them at the King's head, not knowing, of course, who he was. Soon after this, Alfred collected the people of Somerset and Wiltshire and defeated the Danes in a great battle at a place called Edington. Many of the Danes were taken prisoners and their leader, Guthrum, was baptised. After this there was peace in England for ten years, and Alfred set to work to make his country happy and prosperous once more. He made laws for the protection of the poor people and he built ships to protect his shores against pirates. He translated Latin books into English and he ordered that all free-born English boys should be sent to school. He rebuilt towns and monasteries, churches and fortresses, and he spent his whole life in the care of his people, living very simply and humbly, the model for all time of a Christian king, eager to do his duty and, like all men who do their duty, not bothering too much about what might happen to him.

Unfortunately, the last years of this good king were troubled by more wars against the Danes. Another pirate fleet, consisting of three hundred and thirty ships, landed a Danish

army in Kent. These Danes streamed over the whole country and managed to get as far north as Chester. Before Alfred's death, however, they had been driven back to their ships in the English Channel. Though these invaders had been repulsed, many Danes were left behind in permanent settlements in various parts of the country, and after the death of the great King Alfred, his daughter, who was known as the "Lady of the Mercians," stormed the strongholds of these Danish settlers and made it impossible for them any longer to attack the English towns and villages. "The Lady of the Mercians" wanted the English and the Danes to become one nation, and this was now possible because the Danes who had settled in England had become Christian. The unity of the two peoples was brought about during the reign of Athelstan, the grandson of Alfred the Great, and when Athelstan's son, Edgar the Peaceful, was crowned at Bath on Whit-Sunday, 973, all the people of England accepted him as their king. This happy state of affairs was largely the work of a wise and clever priest whose name was Archbishop Dunstan. He was born at Glastonbury, one of

the few real places of learning in England at this time. He was a fine musician and he had a great affection for animals and birds. When he was twenty-two, he was made Abbot of the Monastery at Glastonbury, which he entirely rebuilt, enforcing discipline and making the monks obey the laws and rules of their order. Afterwards he was made Archbishop of Canterbury and the chief adviser of the King. Dunstan made friends with the Danes and with the Scotch. He caused laws to be made and to be obeyed, and he made rules which compelled men to deal and trade fairly with each other.

Things were very bad in England at this time for the poor people. A great many of them were slaves either of the farmers or of the great lords, and, although the law forbade the selling of slaves, nevertheless, many of them were taken to the seaports and sold to masters in foreign countries. The constant wars with the Danes had made the people poorer and more miserable than ever.

When the Angles and the Saxons sailed from North Germany to settle in England, they used to boast that they were all free men, but much

of this freedom had disappeared by the end of the tenth century. Archbishop Dunstan's good work did not endure for very long. The good King Edgar was succeeded by foolish kings, the priests began to quarrel with each other and the Danes once more began to ravage the country. To make things worse, there was for some years a great famine in the country. In the year 993, the Danes again attacked England and laid siege to London, and they were only prevented from marching inland by the payment of a heavy sum of money. Two years afterwards, they sailed up the river Medway and laid siege to Rochester. As a sort of punishment for these invasions, the English king at that time, a foolish man whom his subjects called Ethelred the Unready, ordered that all the Danish sailors who were staying in English ports, and all the other Danes who had been allowed to settle in the country, should be put to death. This deed was as stupid as it was wicked, because it brought the Danish armies back to England and, for ten years, they plundered the country, burning and stealing wherever they went. By the end of that time the Danes were the masters of the

whole country, and the Danish king's son, Canute, became King of England. You may be rather surprised to be told that it was a good thing for the English when Canute became their king. He was a very wise man, and he determined to try once more to make all the peoples in England one united nation. He encouraged industry, he made a law that no slaves should be sold out of the country, he rebuilt the monasteries and he strove hard to give the people peace and prosperity. Eight years before his death, Canute made a pilgrimage to Rome, and while he was there he wrote a letter to his people in England in which he said: "I have vowed to God to lead a right life in all things, to rule justly and piously my realms and subjects and to administer just judgment to all. If heretofore I have done aught beyond what was just through headiness or negligence of youth, I am ready with God's help to amend it utterly. I have no need that money be heaped together for me by unjust demands." I am sure you will see from this letter that Canute was a good king, really anxious for the happiness of his subjects. I daresay you have heard the story of how he

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R. E. Pine

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was one day sitting by the side of the sea, and to flatter him his courtiers assured him that he was master of the sea as well as of the land. He at once ordered his chair to be taken to the water's edge. The tide was running in, and the King told the waves to come no further. Of course, the waves did not obey him, and soon his chair was standing in water and his feet were wet. Then the King turned to the courtiers and rebuked them for their silly flattery.

After the death of Canute, there was more fighting and unrest in England. The most powerful man in the country was a great lord called Earl Godwin. He was married to a Danish wife and he had been one of Canute's ministers. For a time he was anxious that Canute should be followed in England by other Danish kings, but at last he agreed that the son of Ethelred the Unready, known in our history as Edward the Confessor, should be king of England. While the Danish kings were ruling in England, Edward the Confessor had lived at the Court of the Count of Normandy. He was a kindly, weak man who had forgotten how to speak English and was

really a foreigner in his own land. For a while he allowed Earl Godwin to rule England in his name, but he had brought with him from Normandy many bishops and lords, and these men soon began to quarrel with Godwin and the quarrel ended in another war. After the death of Godwin, his son Harold became the chief man in the kingdom, and, for twelve years, England enjoyed a time of peace and prosperity until the death of the childless Edward the Confessor in 1066.

Now I want you, before I start the next chapter, to think of what England and the English were like in 1066. I have told you that the people who lived in England at the beginning of my story were called Britons. I have told you how the Romans came here with their armies, and that in the armies there were soldiers from France and Spain and many other countries. I have told you how the Angles and the Saxons came and settled in England and how, three hundred years afterwards, the Danes came from Scandinavia. It was impossible for all these different races to live together in such a small country as England without intermarrying with each other, and

so the people of England, when Edward the Confessor died, were descended not from one race, but from many races. I think that this is a most important thing for us to remember, because when we understand that so many different peoples helped to make the English nation, to which we are all so proud to belong, we shall also understand that the English nation to-day is closely related to other nations, with whom, for this reason as well as for many others, it is foolish and wicked for us to quarrel.

In this year 1066, England was not, as it is now, covered with meadows and cultivated fields. One third of it was nothing but forest, another third was wild heath and moor, and part of the rest was swampy marsh-land. The great historian, J. R. Green, tells us: "The bustard roamed over the downs, the beaver still haunted Beverley, huntsmen roused the bear in its forest lair, the London craftsmen chased the wild boar and the wild ox in the woods of Hampstead, while wolves prowled round the homesteads of the North."

The Anglo-Saxons had become a civilised people since they had first settled in England. The walls of their houses were covered with silk

hangings ornamented with needlework. Their tables and chairs were beautifully carved. They had learned to use knives and spoons, and their dishes were often made of gold and silver. The Anglo-Saxons were a handsome people, and the beauty of their women was famous all over Europe.

CHAPTER III

THE NORMANS

At this time (1066), that part of France round the mouth of the Seine, which includes the towns of Rouen, Caen, Dieppe and Havre (look at the map and see exactly where this country is and how near it is to England), was inhabited by people called the Normans. Norman means North man, and the Normans, who had settled in France, came from the same countries in North Europe as the Danes who had settled in England. By the year 1066, they had been for a long time in France, they had learned to speak French and they had been converted to the Christian religion. The Normans were a very warlike people and very reckless. They loved adventures and, as they could not get all the adventures that they wanted in France, some of them had wandered away to the south of Italy and had conquered the island of Sicily, where they had built

wonderful churches which remain to-day very much as they were so many hundreds of years ago. At the time about which I am telling you, the Normans were governed by a duke called William. He was a brave man, very strong, and very fond of fighting. He was also, I am sorry to say, extremely cruel, severely punishing anyone who dared to disobey him. William was a lonely man. He had few friends and he did not care a bit whether other people loved him or hated him. At the same time, he was just and fair to his subjects when they were obedient, and he was happiest when he was trudging all by himself through quiet woods and forests. It was said of him that "he loved the wild deer as though he had been their father."

This Duke William was not content just to be the ruler of Normandy. Before he became King of England, Edward the Confessor had lived for many years at the Duke's Court, and William said that Edward had promised that he should be King of England after his death. When Edward died, however, the English nobles chose as their king Harold, the son of the Earl Godwin about whom I told you in

the last chapter. William was furiously angry. He gathered together an army, prepared a fleet of ships, crossed the Channel, and anchored his ships off Pevensey, which, if you look at your map, you will see is in Sussex between Hastings and Eastbourne. Harold was away in Yorkshire when William arrived off the coast. The King of Norway had landed an army on our eastern shores, and Harold had to defeat this army before he could think of opposing William. After a victory over the Norwegians, he hurried south as fast as he could and a great battle was fought at a place called Senlac near Hastings.

William tripped and fell when he jumped out of his boat on Pevensey beach. His friends, who were very superstitious, thought that this meant that he and his army would be beaten by Harold and the English and that they would be driven back to their ships. But William said, "Oh, no; I have embraced the country with both my hands, and now it will surely be mine." William was justified in his belief. When the fight began, it seemed that Harold was going to win, but thanks to William's courage and his cleverness as a

general, the Normans were successful in the end, and Harold was killed by an arrow which pierced his right eye. After the battle, William marched to Canterbury and London. For a little while, the citizens of London thought of opposing him, but when the Conqueror (for we remember the Norman duke as William the Conqueror) set fire to Southwark, that part of London which is south of London Bridge, the citizens gave way, and soon afterwards William was crowned as King of England in Westminster Abbey. He was crowned by the English Archbishop, and he was recognised as King of England, not because he had defeated Harold, but because men believed that Edward the Confessor, whom they loved very much, had said that he should be king. Nevertheless, the people in the north and in the west revolted against his rule, and there was much fighting, and many people were killed, and many houses and villages were destroyed before the whole of England accepted William as its king. Indeed, this did not happen until five years after his soldiers had landed on the beach at Pevensey. The English made their last stand in the marshy lands of Lincolnshire, under the

leadership of Hereward the Wake, whose story you can read in a novel written by Charles Kingsley.

When the Normans came to England, they brought what is called the Feudal System with them. I have already tried to explain to you in *The Child's Book of France* what the Feudal System meant. All the land in the country belonged to the King. He kept what he wanted for himself and divided the rest among his great lords, who had to pay rent to him for the land which he gave them. The rent was not paid in money as your fathers pay rent for their houses nowadays, but when the King went to war each of the great lords had to provide him with a certain number of soldiers. The great lords divided up their land into smaller portions, and these portions were given to men whom the lords called their vassals, who had to supply them with money and food, and who also had to send their sons to fight whenever the great lords called for them. Sometimes these vassals were ordered to fight in quarrels between one great lord and another, and sometimes they were wanted when the King called on the great lords to supply men for his royal army.

There were other people who had no land at all. They were called serfs, and they had to fight and work just as they were told and were really nothing but slaves. There were many serfs in England long before William the Conqueror came here. But after the Norman Conquest, William naturally gave most of the land to the men who had crossed the Channel with him; so that the great lords and many of the vassals were Normans, and the serfs were all Anglo-Saxons or, as we now call them, English. There were many bad things about the Feudal System, but one good thing was that it encouraged what is called chivalry, which means knightliness. The knight was a follower of a great lord or the king, and he took an oath always to do his duty, to fight for God and women and the weak and to be courteous to everyone. I should like once again to advise you to read Sir Walter Scott's novel *Ivanhoe*, from which you will learn what splendid fellows some of these old knights were.

The Norman kings were very fond of hunting, and they used most of the land which they kept for themselves as hunting grounds, cruelly

turning the poor people out of their cottages and letting the fields, that had been ploughed, become covered with bushes and trees, among which the wild boars and wolves, which they hunted, might make their lairs. The New Forest in Hampshire was one of these royal hunting places. The poor people were strictly forbidden to kill any of the animals that were preserved for the King's sport and, if they disobeyed this law and were caught, they were either hanged or had one of their hands chopped off.

After he had established the Feudal System in England, William had all the land measured up and all the oxen and sheep and pigs counted, with the names of the people who owned the land and the animals, and all these things were written down in a book, called the Domesday Book, which is still kept in a place called the Records Office in London. The great lords or feudal barons, as they were called, who settled in England after the Norman Conquest, lived in castles built of stone and protected by high walls and a moat. Besides the barons and their families, scores of squires and pages and fighting men also lived in these great

castles. The barons cared for very little but eating and drinking and hunting and fighting. But they were often very generous, and in every castle there was a chaplain to say prayers and to do his best to persuade the baron and his servants to act rightly and kindly. William turned out most of the English bishops and appointed Normans in their place. One reason why he did this was because the English bishops had failed to do their duty, and that under their rule the Church had been badly looked after. It was not a good thing for the English people to have bishops who could not speak the English language, but it is only fair for me to tell you that in choosing his bishops, "the King considered not so much men's riches or power as their holiness and wisdom."

At the time of William the Conqueror, Jews for the first time were allowed to live in England. Even in those days the Jews were often rich people and liked to lend their money, at what is called usury, which means that a man lends you one pound and that after some time you pay him back two pounds. William and his great lords borrowed money from the Jews to

pay for their soldiers and their hunting, and also to pay for the building of castles and cathedrals and churches, and in return the King protected the Jews against the hatred of the people, promised them justice and allowed them to worship God in their own way in their synagogues.

William the Conqueror reigned in England for twenty-one years. He was succeeded by his son, William Rufus, which means William the Red, who spent his short reign in fighting and hunting and quarrelling with the bishops and the great lords. He was killed in the New Forest by an arrow fired, perhaps accidentally, by a man called Walter Tyrrell. William Rufus was followed by his brother, Henry I, who married an Anglo-Saxon princess. This, of course, pleased the English people, because they thought that their next king would have an Englishwoman for a mother. In this hope, however, they were disappointed, because the son of Henry I died before his father, and was never a king. Henry I was a far wiser man than his brother, and during his reign two very interesting things happened. One was that the towns in this country became

larger and more prosperous and men began to get rich through trading with foreign countries, and the other was that the English (who, you may remember, were partly Anglo-Saxon, partly Danes and partly British) and the Normans, whose fathers had come over with the Conqueror, began to be more friendly to each other, to marry into each other's families, and in this way to make two different peoples into one. Henry was very fond of books, but he was also very greedy, and he died from over-eating.

After the death of Henry I, Stephen of Blois, the son of William the Conqueror's daughter Adela, became King of England. He was a bad king, and for twenty years the people of England were made miserable by wars between the King and Matilda, the daughter of Henry I, and by terrible taxes which the King made them pay. Stephen was followed by Henry II, the grandson of Henry I. He was a stout, large-featured, energetic man, always on his legs from morning to night. He ate very little, he did not care in the least about his clothes, he had a splendid memory and he was a very good scholar. He

resolved that England should no longer suffer as she had suffered during the reign of Stephen, and he determined to do two things—to make the people who lived in England into one united people, and to break the power of the great lords so that they could no longer make the common people miserable by their continual quarrels and fighting. Henry's chief minister was a man called Thomas à Becket. In those days, the chief places in the State were generally held by priests, because the priests were the only people who had much education. Thomas à Becket was also Archbishop of Canterbury, and he was the first Englishman to be chosen to be an English archbishop since the Norman Conquest. At first Henry and Becket were very fond of each other. An old writer says :

"Never in Christian times were two men more of a mind. Sometimes they would play together like boys of an age in hall. In church they sat together, together they rode out. Sometimes the King would ride his horse into the hall where the Chancellor sat at meat, and jumping over the table would sit and dine with him."

Soon, however, the King and the Chancellor had a bitter quarrel. The King wanted to be the absolute master of England. He wanted the priests and the bishops to obey his orders as well as the great lords and common people. But Becket insisted that the Church could not obey the orders of the King and that priests who broke the law must be tried in the Bishops' Court and not in the King's Court. For six years Thomas à Becket was compelled to live out of England for fear of the King's wrath. When he returned, he was received with loudly expressed joy by the men of Kent, which seems to show that the common people were on the Archbishop's side and against the King. This was really quite natural, because in these Middle Ages, about which I am now writing, the Church was the protector of the poor and the humble against the rich and powerful. Soon after he had returned to Canterbury, four of the King's knights, encouraged by Henry's curses on "the idle knaves who allow me to be bearded by an upstart priest," attacked the Archbishop in his cathedral, as he stood on the altar steps, and there he was killed by a blow from one of the knights, called

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Fitz-Urse. The news of the murder of Thomas à Becket horrified the whole of Europe. It was said that miracles were performed on his tomb. He was numbered among the Christian martyrs, and as St. Thomas of Canterbury he became the most popular of English saints. For many years afterwards, pilgrims from all parts of England journeyed to Canterbury in order to pray on the tomb of St. Thomas. One of the earliest of the many splendid books written by Englishmen, which I hope you will read one of these days, is called *The Canterbury Tales*. It tells the story of one of these pilgrimages and gives a very interesting account of the pilgrims. It was written by a man called Chaucer, who lived about two hundred years after the death of St. Thomas, and who is often called "the father of English poetry," because he was the first man who wrote fine poetry in our language.

Becket's death enabled the King to have most of his own way. But the independence of the Church was not entirely lost, and this independence gave the priests and bishops the power to perform most valuable services to the nation as a whole. It is a little difficult,

perhaps, for us to understand the large part that the priests and particularly the monks, who lived in monasteries, played in the life of the English people in these long-ago times. When a man was sick, he went to the monastery just as we should go to a hospital; when he was poor and had no home, he went to the monastery just as we go to a workhouse or an almshouse; when he was on a journey and wanted some place in which to sleep for a night, he went to a monastery just as we go to an hotel. All the schools in the country were in the monasteries, and nearly all the libraries. Some of the monks were clever artists, who spent their time making beautifully illustrated books or painting stained glass for the cathedrals or making musical instruments or drawing plans for new churches. Other monks were historians and wrote out the history of their own times or the times that had gone before. So you will see that the monastery in the Middle Ages was a very busy place and that the monks were very useful servants of the people. When the King and the great lords were oppressing the poor people and sometimes making them pay all their money in taxes, the monks fed them,

looked after them when they were ill, and educated their sons.

No one would defend Henry II for the murder of Thomas à Becket, but he did some good things in his reign for which we must always be grateful. I daresay you remember that the Romans gave laws to the people in this country. When the Angles and the Saxons came here, the power of the law was destroyed and no one bothered very much whether the law was broken or not. King Alfred and Archbishop Dunstan and King Canute tried to give the English people laws again, but during the time when the Danes were constantly landing on the English coast and burning villages and killing men and women, and afterwards when William the Conqueror was fighting to secure his power, and afterwards again when the great lords were fighting against each other or against the king, there was no chance that laws could be obeyed and no use in making new laws. But England had become a peaceful country during the reign of Henry II and he was anxious that the people should feel secure and that their lives and property should be defended. He made

arrangements that people who broke the law should be tried and punished, that judges should travel through the country and that everyone should be assured of a fair trial.

I ought to tell you that, besides being King of England, Henry II was also ruler of more than half of France. No man could really govern two countries, and Henry II was always in trouble either here or on the other side of the Channel. He had several sons, but they were not very good sons and, towards the end of his life, they rebelled against their father and made war on him. He lived to be a very old man and, though he had done some good for England during his life, he died unhappy and heartbroken.

Henry II was the first of the Plantagenet kings. The Plantagenets and their followers always wore a sprig of broom in their helmets when they went into battle. The Latin for broom is *planta genista*, and from these two Latin words the name Plantagenet was derived.

The next King of England was Richard I, always called Richard Cœur de Lion, which means Richard the Lion-hearted, whom we remember principally because he went away

from England to fight in Palestine in order to recover the country where Our Lord was born and died, from the Saracens who persecuted Christian pilgrims and did not believe in Christ. For over two hundred years the peoples of Europe tried hard to make Palestine a Christian country. During those two hundred years there were eight different Crusades, that is, eight attempts of the Christians to win the Holy Land. It was during the third Crusade that Richard Cœur de Lion left his home in England to fight in the East. The Saracens in Palestine were Moslems, people who followed the religion of Mahomet, and it is interesting for us to know that the country of Our Lord remained in the hands of the Moslems until it was captured by an English army, under Lord Allenby, during the Great War. The most splendid thing about the Crusades was that, at the beginning, they were entirely unselfish. Men—some of them kings, great lords and famous knights, others mere working-people—left behind everything they valued and made a long, perilous journey to fight against a very fierce enemy, not for money or even for fame, but because they thought it

was a terrible thing that the country where Christ lived should be ruled by the infidels. It is, unfortunately, true that when they got to the Holy Land there were many quarrels among the Crusaders, and that some of them forgot the splendid idea with which they had started, and began to plan to gain money and high position for themselves. When you grow older you will learn that one of the sad things about life is that we so often fail in our good intentions and are so often untrue to our best selves. But though the Crusaders may sometimes have failed, the Crusades themselves were perfectly splendid, and Richard Cœur de Lion has an important place in our history and in the history of Europe just because he was a Crusader. He loved adventure. He was very strong and generous, as well as patient and cool in times of danger, and he was a poet and loved beautiful songs almost as much as he loved courageous deeds. You will find a fine description of Richard Cœur de Lion in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, which I hope you will not fail to read. Richard performed heroic deeds in Palestine, but the Third Crusade was no more successful than the others, and

the King had to come back home, leaving the Holy Land still unconquered. His failure was largely due to the treachery of the King of France and the Duke of Austria, who were jealous of Richard and hated him because of his chivalry and his skill as a fighter. While he was crossing Europe, on his way home, he was imprisoned by the Duke of Austria and for a long time no one even knew where the King was. Then his prison was discovered by one of his friends, the poet Blondel, who sang a song outside the King's cell, to which the King replied by singing another song.

While Richard was in prison, his place in England had been treacherously taken by his younger brother John, about whom I shall have much to tell you in the next chapter. When the King was released, the King of France wrote to John: "The devil is loose, take care of yourself." When he came back to England, Richard promptly dealt with his treacherous brother, and then he had to cross over to France to look after his possessions there, and during the fighting that followed the King was killed. Before he died, he

generously pardoned the archer who had shot him.

The death of Richard meant the loss to the English kings of most of their possessions in France, and this was really a good thing for the people of England. I think you will understand that it is best for each nation to have its own government and its own king, to look after its own affairs and to be quite independent, although, of course, every nation should be friendly with every other nation. Richard was so interested in the Crusades and was so little in England that during his reign the country was badly governed and the people grew very discontented. They were the more discontented because they had to pay very heavy taxes to support the army that the King took with him to the Holy Land. Some men found it so hard to pay the taxes, that they left their homes and their fields, and went to live a free, open-air life in the woods and forests, shooting the deer and other wild animals, although they were forbidden to do this by the laws, often stealing from rich bishops and lords, but always behaving with generous kindness to the poor. The most

famous of these outlaws, as they were called, was Robin Hood, who lived in Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire with Friar Tuck and Little John and other brave Englishmen. You can read all about Robin Hood in that wonderful novel *Ivanhoe*, which I have already advised you to read. Things at last got so bad in England that men felt that something must be done to secure good government and to prevent the King from doing exactly what he liked. This feeling led to very important results.

Before I tell you what these results were, there are three things that happened during the years covered by this chapter which I must not forget to mention. Soon after the murder of Thomas à Becket, Henry II invaded Ireland with a large army. He landed at the town of Waterford, and the Irish chieftains and the Irish bishops paid homage to him as their king. I hope that you have not forgotten that, many hundreds of years before, Ireland was so civilised that she had sent priests to England to teach the English not only Christianity, but also how to read and write. Unfortunately, for reasons which would take me too long to

explain here, Ireland had fallen back almost into savagery, while England was slowly becoming civilised, and when Henry II landed in Ireland, most of the Irish people were living a barbarous life, clad in rough sheep-skins and living in miserable huts. Henry II did nothing to make their lives happier or better. The majority of the Irish people hated being ruled by the foreign lords, whom the English King sent into the country, and all that Henry succeeded in doing was to begin that long quarrel between England and Ireland which has unfortunately lasted right into your life-times.

In the reigns of Henry II and Richard I, the people who lived and worked in the English towns formed themselves into what were called Guilds. There were the Merchant Guilds to which the men who owned shops and ships belonged, the object of which was to encourage trade and to help the poor; and there were the Trade Guilds to which the men of different trades belonged—the carpenters to one, the silk-workers to another, the goldsmiths to another, and so on. The object of the Trade Guilds was first that the members should help

each other, and then that they should look after the sick and support the parish church. These Guilds were a splendid thing for England. They helped to make a man proud of his trade and of the town in which he lived, and they encouraged good government, because, if a man loved his town, he did not like to think that it was badly governed, and so the Guilds greatly aided general prosperity and content.

During the years about which I have written in this chapter, most of the beautiful Cathedrals, in which men still worship God, were built in England by artists and masons and glass-workers and wood-workers, who were eager to show their love of God by putting up splendid buildings in His honour. All these workers belonged to the Trade Guilds, and I think you will agree that it was a fine thing that ordinary working-men should not just selfishly think about themselves, but should join together and, inspired by a fine idea, should erect the most beautiful buildings in the world.

CHAPTER IV

MERRIE ENGLAND

In this chapter I have to tell you the story of England during three hundred years, from the beginning of the thirteenth century to the end of the fifteenth. I have called the chapter "Merrie England" because, although there were times during these years when the English people were discontented and oppressed either by kings or by great lords, on the whole the common people were happier than they had ever been before in the story of our island, and indeed, perhaps, happier than they have ever been since. Men who in earlier ages had been serfs, which as I have told you means little more than slaves, now had little farms of their own which they sowed and ploughed, and on which they grew food for their wives and children, and, all over the country, there were large tracts of common land, on which all the people of the villages were able to graze their

cows, their sheep and their pigs. In the towns, the Guilds, about which I told you in the last chapter, gave the working people pride in their work and secured good wages for them. The wool from the backs of English sheep and the splendid things made by English workmen were readily sold to the people of other countries, and this, of course, made England very prosperous. The ordinary Englishman was well fed and, to a large extent, he was a free man. When he had finished his work, he spent his time in all kinds of sports. He was particularly fond of shooting with bows and arrows, and the result was that the English archers became the best in the world, and when the English king went to war, it was these archers, ordinary men who had joined the king's armies from the different villages, and not the great lords with their armour and their heavy war-horses, who won victories for England. Unfortunately the good times did not last even to the end of this one chapter.

All through the country, the monasteries remained as hospitals for the sick and almshouses for the poor. It happened in the early part of the years about which I am telling

you in this chapter, that the bishops and many of the priests in England neglected their duties and ceased to care for the poor people as they ought to have done. Just at this time, however, the wandering friars came to England. The friars were divided into two orders. There were the Black Friars or Dominicans, who first settled in England at the place that is still called Blackfriars in London, who were founded by a Spaniard called St. Dominic; and there were the Grey Friars or Franciscans, who first settled in London in the street that we now call Cornhill, who were founded by an Italian called St. Francis. I very much hope that, after you have finished this chapter, you will ask someone to give you the life of St. Francis to read. He was one of the best and most lovable men who ever lived. Both the Dominicans and the Franciscans were vowed to poverty. That is to say, they never had any money of their own and they had to beg for their daily food. Poverty seemed to St. Francis quite a beautiful thing. I do not think he was at all right in this, but, because he had devoted himself to Our Lady of Poverty, the

poorer and more miserable a man was the more St. Francis loved him. Indeed St. Francis loved everything on the earth, and he called all the animals and even the sun and the moon and the wind his brothers and sisters. The friars were warmly welcomed by the English people, who were soon convinced of their sincerity when they saw the Franciscans " mixing their sour small beer with water to make it go farther," living in poverty and caring only for the poor. Many of these friars were learned and educated men and they became the principal teachers at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and it was to these brothers of poverty that these great universities of ours owed the beginning of their influence. The friars insisted that poverty should never stop a clever boy from going to the university and being properly educated. The Franciscans, too, were very good doctors, and they helped the English people to fight successfully against many diseases. The first great English philosopher was a man called Roger Bacon. I am afraid you will not understand exactly what Roger Bacon did until you are much older.

All I can tell you here is that he helped men to think intelligently and to understand the facts of the world in which they lived. Some people say that Roger Bacon was one of the half-dozen greatest men who ever lived in the world, and it is interesting for us to know that he was an Englishman, that he lived at Oxford in the thirteenth century and that he was a Franciscan friar. Roger Bacon was not only a very clever man, he was also, as a follower of St. Francis ought to be, a very good man. On one occasion he wrote to the Pope about one of his pupils, and he said : " When he came to me as a poor boy, I caused him to be nurtured and instructed for the love of God, especially since for aptitude and innocence I have never found so towardly a youth."

When Richard the Lion-hearted died, and his brother John became King of England, he at once found himself in conflict both with the barons and the Church, who now were able to rely on the support of the Guilds of free men in the towns. The barons said that the King must no longer be able to do exactly what he liked, but that he must respect the

rights of the people, and what they claimed for themselves they claimed for all the people in the country. King John was forced to meet the barons with the Archbishop of Canterbury at a place called Runnymede, near Windsor, on the Thames, and they made him sign an agreement which is called Magna Charta, or the Great Charter, which is regarded as the foundation of the freedom of the English people. In this Charter, the King agreed that every man should be justly treated and that he should not have to pay the judges before he could obtain justice; that no man should be put into prison before he had been tried properly by a judge and it was proved that he had broken some of the laws of his country; that foreign merchants should be allowed to come into England to sell their goods and to buy from the English people; and that every Englishman should be allowed to go out of England and to come back again when he liked, except in time of war.

King John was a wicked man, and like most wicked men he was very silly. He signed the Charter, but he had no sooner signed it than

he made up his mind to break it, and he asked the King of France to send soldiers to help him to take away the liberty granted to the English people and to make himself supreme master once again. Again there was fighting in England, but fortunately it did not last very long. While he was crossing the Wash in Lincolnshire, King John's army was caught by the rising tide. He lost most of his baggage and his treasures, and he, himself, died a few days afterwards at the town of Newark in Nottinghamshire. Everybody in England was very glad when John died, for, as I have said, he was an utterly cruel and wicked man. Soon after he became king, he was afraid that the English people might prefer Prince Arthur, the son of his brother Geoffrey, for their king. So he made up his mind to put Arthur's eyes out so that he would be unfit to rule. Arthur was only a little boy, and when the man whom John had chosen came with the hot irons to the child, he looked so pretty and he cried so bitterly that the man's heart was touched and he went away, leaving Arthur unhurt. But the boy could not escape from his uncle, who,

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soon afterwards, had him killed in a castle in Normandy.

During his reign, John had a very bitter quarrel with the Pope, and, at one time, the Pope ordered all the churches in England to be shut up. The people of England were prevented from receiving the Christian Sacraments or from being buried by a Christian priest. John was, at last, compelled to give way to the Pope and to allow a priest called Stephen Langton to be Archbishop of Canterbury. This was a very good thing, for Stephen Langton had a great deal to do with forcing the King to sign the Magna Charta and, thus, helping the English people to become free men and not the slaves of the king.

Henry III, John's son, was only ten years old when he became king. The great lords who governed the country, while the King was a child, tried to break the Great Charter, although it had been forced from King John by other great lords. But they failed in their attempt. The Church once more stood up for the people, and Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, not only insisted that

the Charter should be kept, but also made the King's ministers agree to a new charter in which it was laid down that no more of the land of England should be added to the King's forests, and that in future no man should lose life or limb for killing the King's deer. Henry III loved books and was himself a poet. He built our present Westminster Abbey and he had none of the cruelty of his father John. He was, however, a frivolous man and, when he was old enough to govern for himself, his one idea was not to make the people of England happy, but to win back those parts of France which had been lost during the reigns of his father and his uncle, Richard the Lion-hearted. For twenty years England was sadly misgoverned, and then another champion of English freedom arose to oppose the foolishness of the King. Oddly enough he was a Frenchman. His name was Simon de Montfort, and he had been created Earl of Leicester. Every nation has been greatly helped, at one time or another in its history, by men of foreign birth. This is a good thing for us to remember. And no nation has been better served by a

foreigner than England was served by Simon de Montfort, a man of deep piety and good living. He was the friend of the friars and he was famous for keeping his word. His one ambition was to secure "the peace of his fellow-citizens." At first he tried to persuade the King and, when persuasion failed, he raised an army, largely consisting of the people of London, and defeated the King's army at Lewes in Sussex. After this victory a poet of the time wrote: "The English were despised like dogs, but now they have lifted up their heads and their foes are vanquished." Simon de Montfort compelled the King to summon a Parliament, and this was a most important Parliament, because it was the first to which the common people of England were ever called. Before this the Parliaments had merely consisted of great lords and bishops and the heads of the monasteries. Now two burgesses were summoned from every town, and these burgesses were members of those Guilds of free merchants and free workmen about which I have told you. However, this new Parliament was not able to do very much good. Very

few of the other great barons supported Simon de Montfort and, soon, he was forced to fight against the King with just a few horsemen and a number of half-armed Welshmen who ran away at the beginning of the battle. This battle took place at Evesham in Worcestershire. Simon de Montfort was thrown from his horse by a lance-thrust and killed, while he lay on the ground. His last words were, " It is God's grace," and he died as he had lived, a brave and a good man.

You might think, perhaps, that because Simon de Montfort lost the battle of Evesham his work was entirely destroyed, but, as you grow older, you will learn that no good man's work is ever destroyed. Good work is often begun by one man and finished by others, but it is to the first man who dared to begin that we owe the heaviest debt. Henry III died in the year 1272 and was followed by his son, Edward I, one of the cleverest kings who ever sat on the throne of England. Edward I had lived abroad for some years, and when he came home, he taught the English people, among other things, how to grow vegetables in

their gardens. The first thing that Edward I did was to conquer Wales and add it to the English kingdom. You will remember that, after the Saxons came to England, the Britons took shelter in Wales and in Cornwall, and the Welsh people remained a different race to the English people, speaking a different language, as, indeed, in North Wales—the country of Mr. Lloyd George—they do to this day. When Edward I came to the throne, the Welsh were ruled by a Prince called Llewellyn, who loved music and poetry and kept a crowd of poets at his Court. Llewellyn fought very stubbornly to preserve the independence of his country, but his friends deserted him and he was at last killed in a battle on the banks of the river Wye in South Wales. Llewellyn was the last independent prince of Wales. After his death, Edward I presented his baby son to the Welsh people from one of the windows of Carnarvon Castle, and said that he should be their prince, and, since then, the eldest son of the English king has always been the Prince of Wales. After he had conquered Wales, Edward I settled down to carry on the work of Simon

de Montfort. He instituted law-courts all through the country, he made laws to protect travellers from highway robbers, and to enable merchants to carry on their businesses without interference, and he called Parliaments together, to which he summoned not only the barons and the knights and the bishops, but also two burgesses "from every city, borough and leading town." From this time onward, the common people of England have helped to make their own laws and have helped to decide how the money, which they pay in taxes, shall be spent. This means that since the time of Edward I, the English people have had some freedom, and have not been obliged just to obey the King and to give him whatever money he asked, without knowing what he was going to do with it.

Having conquered Wales, Edward I set out to conquer Scotland, but the Scotch people loved to govern themselves and were by no means willing that England should govern them and, although, after some years' fighting, Edward I succeeded in subduing the country, it soon was in revolt again under the leadership

of two great Scotsmen called Robert Bruce and William Wallace. Bruce defeated the English armies at Bannockburn in 1314 after the death of Edward I, and the Scots resisted all the English attempts at conquest in the years that followed. It was not till many years afterwards that the English and Scotch people joined together to make one united nation. It was a splendid thing that this union came about through willing agreement and not through one nation conquering the other.

I have already told you that Edward I was a very clever man. He was generous. He hated cruelty. "No man ever asked mercy of me," he once said, "and was refused." He was stubborn, courageous, religious, a fine soldier and every bit an Englishman. He loved the English people and the English people loved him. He gave prosperity and peace to the country and he would not allow the great barons to have too much power. Edward II was a very different man to his father. He surrounded himself with idle, greedy favourites. He was disliked by the English people for losing the battle of Bannockburn, and the whole of

England was glad and relieved when he was killed in Berkeley Castle and was succeeded by his son, the great King Edward III.

When Edward III came to the throne, all the people in England, and not merely the common people, spoke English, and French, which was the language of the Norman kings, was no longer spoken even at Court. During this reign, English became not only a spoken but a written language, and the great poet Chaucer lived and wrote his *Canterbury Tales* about which I have already told you. Chaucer's poems are full of happiness and they seem to speak the spirit of a very happy people. After Chaucer had died, no more poetry was written in England for some long time, and from this we may guess that the English people grew less and less happy.

Edward III was a very clever king. He cared a great deal for his country but, like most kings, he did many wrong and foolish things. He persecuted the Jews, as Richard Cœur de Lion had persecuted them, and drove them out of the country. In those days there was no place for the Jews in any Christian country,

and they had to take refuge in Spain, which was then ruled by the Moors, who were followers of Mahomet. Edward III had not been king long before he started fighting with the French. He said that he was really King of France as well as King of England, and that a large part of France was his property. That was the reason that he gave for starting a war against the French people. His real reason was a very different one. The English had begun to make a great deal of money by selling their wool to foreign people, and the French kings, who were jealous of England's prosperity, used to send their ships into the English Channel to capture the English ships that were carrying wool away from England and bringing back foreign merchandise. It was to stop this piracy that Edward carried an English army across the Channel in the year 1346. The greater part of this army consisted of those wonderful archers about whom I have already told you. The English army landed at the mouth of the river Seine and attacked the French near the village of Crécy. Both sides fought very bravely. On the English side, the King's son,

who was called the Black Prince, resisted the enemy's fiercest attacks; and on the French side the blind King of Bohemia made his friends lead his horse into the battle in order that he might strike one good blow with his sword.

During the battle, the Black Prince was hard pressed by the enemy, and one of his knights sent to the King to ask that more soldiers might be sent to fight with his son.

"Is my son killed?" said the King.

"No, Sire, please God," returned the messenger.

"Is he wounded?" said the King.

"No, Sire."

"Is he thrown to the ground?" said the King.

"No, Sire, not so; but he is very hard pressed."

"Then," said the King, "go back to those who sent you, and tell them that I shall send no aid; because I set my heart upon my son proving himself this day a brave knight, and because I am resolved, please God, that the honour of a great victory shall be his!"

The battle of Crécy ended in a great victory for the English, and it was a victory won not by great lords and knights in armour, but by common Englishmen from English villages, who were able to shoot their arrows straight and sure from their great long-bows. After the battle of Crécy, Edward marched to Calais, which he was particularly anxious to capture, because it was from Calais that the French ships sailed when they went out into the English Channel to harass the English. The French King was not able to send any soldiers to help the people of Calais, but they themselves were so brave and determined that, for one whole year, they kept the English King outside their walls. I hope you will think that this was a very splendid thing for them to have done. But King Edward was very angry, and when, at last, the people of Calais had to surrender the town, he said that, although he would spare the people, he would cut off the heads of six of the principal men of the town as a punishment for the long resistance. The six men who had been chosen to die came to King Edward with bare feet and wearing nothing but their shirts

and with a rope round their necks and asked him to spare their lives. The King refused. Then the English lords, who admired the bravery of the men of Calais, begged the King to be merciful. Again he refused. Then, last of all, the Queen of England, who had gone across to France to join her husband, knelt down and said to him: "Gentle Sire, from the day that I passed oversea in great peril, as you know, I have asked for nothing: now I pray and beseech you, with folded hands, for the love of Our Lady's Son, to have mercy upon them!" The King could not refuse his wife's prayer, and I am sure that you will be glad that this gentle Queen saved her husband from doing a great wrong.

The English armies went on capturing and plundering French towns and villages. The Black Prince, who, alas, was as cruel as he was brave, led an army up the river Garonne and was attacked by the French at a place called Poitiers, and, again thanks to the archers, the English won the battle, the King of France being taken prisoner and carried away to London. The war, however, went on, and the

French countryside was nothing but ruined farms, uncultivated fields and half-burnt villages. The sad thing is that except for the fact that the French were no longer able to interfere with the English ships, the English people gained nothing at all from all the killing and destruction. In 1360, Edward III signed a treaty with the French King, in which he admitted that he was not King of France at all. He kept, however, the French provinces that he had taken, as well as the town of Calais. Ten years afterwards, the Black Prince was back again in France, laying siege to the town of Limoges. The Prince was too ill to ride on his horse and he had to be carried from place to place on a litter. When the town was at last forced to surrender, the Prince ordered all the men, women and children, with the exception only of the Bishop and three knights, to be killed, and he, himself, watched his soldiers while they were doing this dreadful thing. Of course, after this all the French people hated the very name of Englishman, although the common English people, on the other side of the Channel, busy in their fields or in their

carpenters' shops or with their weaving looms, were not in the least responsible for the Black Prince's wickedness.

The English armies went on invading France, but they were never able for very long to hold the provinces that they captured. Time passed and one king followed the other on the English throne until, in the year 1413, Henry V, generally called Harry of England, a brave, light-hearted soldier, became the English king. You can read all about Harry of England in Shakespeare's plays, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*. When Henry V first became king, the French people were being made miserable and poor through the constant quarrels of two great French lords, and Henry thought this a good time to repeat the claim of Edward III, that the King of England was also King of France, and once more to send English soldiers across the Channel. His armies landed in Normandy in 1415 and captured the town of Harfleur. During the siege of Harfleur, many of the English soldiers died of disease and many more were so ill that they had to be sent home. With the rest of his army Henry marched

towards Calais. He met the French army at Agincourt on the river Somme and the English once more won a great victory. The battle of Agincourt was fought on St. Crispin's day, and if you will read Shakespeare's *Henry V*, you will find that the English poet has written a splendid speech for the King in which he says that St. Crispin's day will never be forgotten in England. As a matter of fact, very little good came to the English from the battle of Agincourt. Henry V captured Calais again, and in the next year he conquered the whole of Normandy. After this, a treaty was signed in which it was agreed that Henry should marry the daughter of the French King, who had gone mad, that he should be the next King of France, that he should govern the country during the mad King's lifetime, and that, in future, England and France should have the same King.

Two years after signing this treaty, Henry V died, and then Providence sent a splendid woman to save France from her English conquerors. This young woman was called Joan of Arc. The beautiful story of her life

belongs to the history of France and not to the history of England. You can read all about the fine things she did in my *Child's Book of France*. It is enough for me to say here that she inspired the French King and the French soldiers with new courage, and that she herself, young woman as she was, put on a suit of armour and riding on a white horse led the French armies to victory. Afterwards she was taken prisoner and handed over to the English, who accused her of being a witch. She had a mock trial and was burnt alive in the market-place at Rouen. The roughest of the English soldiers wept as they watched this beautiful young girl's sufferings, and, after her death, one of the English generals said: "We are lost, we have burned a saint." He spoke the absolute truth. After Joan's death, the English lost battle after battle until, in the year 1451, Calais was the only place in France which still belonged to the English people. We must always feel ashamed when we think of the part that England played in the killing of Joan of Arc, but still we can feel glad when we read of her fine life and of her brave death, because it

was a good thing for the English as well as for the French that the two countries should be independent and that neither should be master of the other.

While all this fighting was taking place in France, very important things were happening in England. Edward III wanted money so badly to pay his soldiers that he had to give more and more power to the Parliament before they would consent to the taxes which he wished to raise, and that power grew greater and greater through the years about which I am writing in this chapter. In the middle of the fourteenth century, towards the end of the reign of Edward III, a learned Oxford scholar called John Wyclif, translated the Bible into English, attacked the laziness and the luxury of the bishops and priests, and denied that the Pope had any authority in England. Wyclif, who was a great writer of English prose, had the same care as St. Francis had for the poor and the humble, and he sent out simple men in russet gowns to preach to the common people in the English villages. These preachers were called Lollards, and no doubt they helped to

stir up the discontent of the country people against their low wages and against the heavy taxes which they had to pay to keep the English armies in France. In 1348, a terrible plague called the Black Death killed more than half of the people of England. The result was that there were not enough men left to plough and sow and to reap the harvest, and the labourers, who had not died, naturally demanded higher wages when they found that there were more masters than men. Parliament passed laws to reduce these wages and to prevent the country workpeople from going from one parish to another, and this law made the working people very angry. After Edward III died, riots broke out all over the country and a vast crowd of men from Kent and Essex and Hertford marched on London. They were led by a man called Wat Tyler and by a Lollard priest called John Ball, about whom the English poet William Morris wrote a book which he called *The Dream of John Ball*, which I hope you will read one of these days. John Ball took as his text the rhyme, "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentle-

man?" The countrymen were met outside the city of London by the new King, Richard II, and the Lord Mayor. While their leaders were talking together, Wat Tyler was treacherously killed by the Mayor. "Kill, kill," shouted the crowd. "They have killed our captain." "What need ye, my masters?" cried the boy King. "I am your captain and your King; follow me." It was a brave thing to have done, perhaps the only brave thing in a foolish life, for Richard II was one of the foolish kings and his life was very unhappy. The crowd cheered him as crowds will, and most of the countrymen went back to their homes. The King tried to keep his word, but the death of Wat Tyler encouraged the great lords and the great land-owners to resist the people, and this Peasants' War, as it is called, did really very little good. Laws were passed to forbid the child of any country worker to be apprenticed into a town, and none of these country children might be sent to school.

Edward III died in 1377. His grandson, Richard II, reigned for eight years and he was then forced by the great lords to give up his

crown, being afterwards killed in Kenilworth Castle. He was succeeded by Henry IV, the first king of the House of Lancaster, who was followed by his son, Henry V, who, as I have told you, defeated the French at Agincourt. After the death of Henry V, the French drove the English out of France, and the weakness of the new king, Henry VI, led to the twenty-one years' civil war in England which is known as the Wars of the Roses. This was a very peculiar war. The only people who were really interested in it were the great lords and their servants. A famous Frenchman who came to England during this time said, "There are no buildings destroyed or demolished by war, and the mischief of it falls only on those who make the war."

The Wars of the Roses was a struggle between the Dukes of York and the Dukes of Lancaster as to who should be King of England. Before the war began, some friends of the two dukes were arguing and quarrelling in the Temple Gardens in London. During the quarrel, the friends of the Duke of Lancaster plucked red roses and put them in their caps, and the friends

of the Duke of York plucked white roses and put them in their caps, and this is why the war between York and Lancaster is called the War of the Roses. When the war came to an end and Edward IV of York, a very clever and determined man, became King, the great lords had been so broken through the fighting, that the King was absolute master of England, and, for some long time, neither the lords nor the common people could resist his will.

CHAPTER V

TO SHAKESPEARE AND ELIZABETH

After Edward IV, who belonged to the House of York, the party of the White Rose, had defeated the army of the House of Lancaster, the party of the Red Rose, at the battle of Towton, he took away from the great lords who had belonged to the party of his enemies all their land and all their money. In this way he made himself far richer than any English king had been before, and it was not necessary for him, for some time, to summon Parliament and ask them for more money. Edward IV bought ships, loaded them with wool and cloth and sent them away to Italy and Spain to trade with the people there, and when at last he did want money for the government of the country, instead of asking Parliament to agree to taxes, he sent for the London merchants and asked them to give him presents. The merchants liked the King

DRAKE PLAYING BOWLS BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE SPANISH ARMADA

Seymour Lucas, R.A.

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because he too was a merchant, and they generally gave him what he asked. Now, I particularly want you to bear in mind that, owing to the Wars of the Roses, the great lords had lost most of their power and that the King was more powerful and far richer than he had been before.

The King's power was increased by the fact that the Church had grown weaker, partly, perhaps, because the bishops were afraid of the spread of the teaching of the Lollards (you have not forgotten what I told you about John Ball in the last chapter), and partly for other reasons which it would take me too long to explain. Still, for many years after Edward IV had come to the throne, the Church was still strong enough to look after the interests of the poor people and, particularly in the country places, to see that they were paid just wages.

Edward IV became king in 1461. One very important thing happened just before this date, and another very important thing happened just after. The first important thing was the capture of the city of Constantinople by the Turks. Constantinople was a Greek

city. The Greeks were the first people in Europe to love learning and to write splendid books, and although nearly all these books had been written many hundreds of years before this time, the love of learning and the love of books went on in Constantinople while the whole of the rest of Europe was so troubled with quarrels and wars that no one had any time to write books and very few people ever learned to read them. When the Turks took Constantinople, the Greek scholars escaped from the city and came westward to Italy, to France and even to England, and wherever they went, they taught the people once more to read the old stories written by Homer and the other great Greek writers. And having read these old stories, men naturally tried to write new stories for themselves. So, thanks largely to these Greeks from Constantinople, there began at this time all over Europe what has been called "The Revival of Learning," which means that men began to feel that there was something better to do in the world than to quarrel and fight, and something better even than just to work hard for their living. And then the next big thing happened. A

German called Güttenburg invented the art of printing. Before Güttenburg's time, every book had to be copied out by hand, which was, of course, a long job and meant that there were never more than a very few copies of any book in existence. Directly printing was invented, it became easy to have a large number of copies of each book, and you will understand that this made reading much more common. An Englishman called William Caxton learned printing on the Continent, and in the year 1476 he set up the first printing press in England, near the west front of Westminster Abbey, and when this press began to work, the revival of learning began in this country.

Edward IV died in 1483 and was succeeded by his son, Edward V, who was then a boy of thirteen, and this poor boy, with his little brother Richard, was murdered by his uncle in the Tower of London a few months after he had become king. The uncle then proclaimed himself king, with the title of Richard III, but his reign only lasted for two years. Richard III was hated by almost everyone in England, and he was defeated and killed at the battle of Bosworth Field, where, I

ought to tell you, he died fighting very bravely. You can read all about this king in Shakespeare's play *Richard III*, which I hope you will find time to read when you have finished this chapter. The next king was Henry VII, the first of the Tudor kings. They were called Tudors because the father of Henry VII was a Welsh squire named Edmund Tudor. Henry VII became king because the two Houses of Parliament said that he should be king, and, since then, it has been the rule that the English kings are kings because the English people have chosen them to rule over them. Henry VII was a very careful man, very fond of money and anxious to follow the example of Edward IV in not allowing the great lords to be too rich or too powerful and in constantly adding to the King's power. Two or three rebellions occurred during his reign, but fortunately for Henry VII, gunpowder had just been invented, and by using gunpowder in his guns he was easily able to conquer his enemies, who were only armed with swords and bows and arrows.

During the reign of Henry VII many wonderful things happened in the world. Men for the

first time began to make long voyages to hitherto unknown countries across the sea. The most famous of these men was an Italian called Christopher Columbus, who, with two small ships, given to him by the King of Spain, sailed across the Atlantic Ocean and discovered the continent of America. From what Columbus and other sailors told them, men found out that the world was much larger than they had thought it was, and this gave them new interest and made them more eager than ever to read books and to find out more about things. Among the Englishmen who were the pupils of the Greeks who escaped from Constantinople were a priest called Dean Collet, who was so fond of learning that he founded the great school of St. Paul's which still exists in London, and a great and good man called Sir Thomas More, who wrote a book called *Utopia*, which I am sure you will read when you grow up. One of his friends said of Sir Thomas More: "When did nature mould a temper more gentle, endearing and happy than the temper of Thomas More?"

The people in England who were buying books from William Caxton, and who believed

that a new and happier time was beginning, were very tired of their dull, mean king, Henry VII, and when he died and was followed by his son, Henry VIII, everyone was full of joy and hope. Henry VIII was a young man when he became king, and he, too, loved learning, and the people thought that, instead of making wars, he would give up his whole heart to the task of making England a happy, prosperous country. Unfortunately, their hopes were soon disappointed. Henry VIII at once began to fight France, and then he started a war with Scotland which finished with the total defeat of the Scotch at the battle of Flodden Field. After eleven years the wars came to an end, and Henry VIII and King Francis of France had a friendly meeting near Calais. The two kings and their great lords wore such magnificent clothes that this meeting was called "The Field of the Cloth of Gold."

I want you to remember about Henry VIII that he never lost his interest in the new learning. His three children were well educated and were all taught Latin and Greek. Many new schools were started in his reign as well

as in the reigns of his son Edward VI and his daughter Elizabeth, and thanks to the King, Oxford and Cambridge became splendid homes of learning. I also want you to know that the Church, as well as the King, encouraged the new learning. I shall have to tell you soon about the quarrel between the King and the Church, and if you are to really understand it, you must not forget that the bishops were very pleased when they saw new schools being built, and that Sir Thomas More and his friend, the famous Dutchman Erasmus, whose names are always thought of with the " new learning," were always faithful sons of the Catholic Church. Cardinal Wolsey, the famous minister of Henry VIII, himself gave the money to start Christ's College at Oxford.

This Cardinal Wolsey was a very clever man. He was the son of an Ipswich butcher, and it is interesting to remember that he was the last bishop who was the chief minister of an English king. For a long time, he served the King faithfully, helping him to add to his power and to make himself the supreme master of the country. As a reward, the King made him Archbishop of York, persuaded the Pope to

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make him a Cardinal, and gave him so much money that Wolsey was able to build himself a palace at Hampton Court (you can go and see this palace for yourselves), where he lived in as much splendour as if he, himself, had been a king.

When he was quite a young man Henry VIII married a lady called Catherine of Aragon. She was older than he and not very good-looking, and Henry soon grew tired of her and wanted to marry one of her waiting ladies, Anne Boleyn. In order to do this he had to obtain a divorce from the Pope. Mainly because Cardinal Wolsey did not succeed in obtaining the divorce, he lost the King's favour. His high offices were taken away from him and he was ordered to leave London and go to York. Soon after, he was arrested and brought back to the Tower of London, where he died. Before he died, the broken-hearted Cardinal said to the Lieutenant-Colonel of the Tower: "Master Knygton, had I but served God as diligently as I have served the King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs. But this is my due reward for my pains and study, not regarding my ser-

vice to God, but only my duty to my Prince." The Cardinal, indeed, had worked hard to destroy English freedom, and he had never thought of the happiness of the common people. During the early days of the reign of Henry VIII the land in England, which had been ploughed and sown with corn, was being more and more used as pasture land for sheep, because English wool was easily sold for a high price to foreign countries. Many more workpeople are, however, wanted to plough and sow and reap than to look after sheep, and the result was that, in the country villages, thousands of men were unemployed and there was much hunger and misery. It was sad that all the hopes of the new learning should have in such a little time ended in the misery of the common people.

After Wolsey's death, Henry VIII chose as his chief minister a man called Thomas Cromwell, and Thomas Cromwell suggested to the King how he could get the divorce that he wanted and thus be able to marry Anne Boleyn. Some years before, a German monk called Martin Luther had denounced the evils that had grown up in the Church,

and had started a new church which refused to regard the Pope as its head, and which did not believe many of the things which, for hundreds and hundreds of years, the whole Christian Church had believed. Martin Luther began what is called the Reformation, and a part of the German people and many of the German princes joined the Reformed Church which Martin Luther had started. Thomas Cromwell reminded Henry VIII of this and advised him to follow the example of the German princes who refused to acknowledge the authority of the Pope. "Call yourself the head of the English Church," said Cromwell, "and you can then order the English bishops to give you a divorce." This is exactly what happened. Henry VIII forced the Parliament to pass an "Act of Supremacy" which made him head of the Church, and he divorced poor Catherine of Aragon and married Anne Boleyn. There were, of course, many thousands of people in England who honestly agreed with Martin Luther, but the only reason why Henry VIII cut off the English Church from the Roman Church and from the Church in most of the countries in Europe was because

he wanted a new wife. Naturally, many Englishmen were bitterly opposed to the King and refused to admit that the King could be the head of the Church. The King had these men arrested and executed, and among them was Sir Thomas More, perhaps the wisest and best man in England at that time. Henry VIII never had any sympathy with Luther's teaching. He, indeed, had written a book against Luther, and for this the Pope had rewarded him with the title of Defender of the Faith, a title which is used by English kings to our own day. If you look at any of the coins on which King George's head is stamped, you will see "F.D." or "Fid: Def:" after his name, and those letters mean Defender of the Faith.

Anne Boleyn, the mother of our great Queen Elizabeth, for whose sake the King had quarrelled with the Pope, did not hold his affections for very long. He had the poor lady beheaded three years after her marriage, and then he married Jane Seymour. Jane Seymour died three years afterwards, and the King then married Anne of Cleves, whom he promptly divorced because she was not good-looking.

His fifth wife was Catherine Howard, and she, like poor Anne Boleyn, was beheaded. Then he married Catherine Parr, who was lucky enough to live till after the King's death.

Having quarrelled with the Pope, and having beheaded many of the bishops because they would not agree that the King was head of the Church, Thomas Cromwell then suggested to the King that it would be a good way of adding to the King's wealth and power, as well as of weakening the Church, if the monasteries, which existed all over England, were seized by the King's men, the monks driven away and all their lands and property declared to be the King's. It was true that in the course of time the monasteries had become large landowners and that the monks had begun to neglect the many good services to the people which they had for so many years performed so well. Still they remained, in many places, the only friends to whom the common people had to look in times of trouble and difficulty, and the popular anger, when the King seized the monks' goods, was shown

in a revolt of the common people in the north of England called the "Pilgrimage of Grace." Thomas Cromwell suppressed this revolt by bringing savage soldiers from foreign countries, and then he went on robbing the monasteries with mean carefulness. Thomas Cromwell was, as Mr. Chesterton has told us, "a dirty fellow," and you must remember that Henry VIII shut up the monasteries, not because he thought the monks were bad men and were teaching the people things that were not true, but because he was envious of their money. Some of the money he took for himself, but most of it he distributed among his friends. Many of these friends of his were merchants who had grown rich through the increasing trade of England and had bought the land in the country from the old barons who had been ruined in the Wars of the Roses. So the sacking of the monasteries saw a new kind of great lord in England. These men had been made richer through the quarrel between Henry VIII and the Pope, and for this reason they were inclined to support the new Reformed Church against the old Catholic Church.

It was Thomas Cromwell who found Anne of Cleves, a very ugly woman, as a wife for Henry VIII, and this so annoyed the King that soon afterwards Cromwell was accused of treason and executed. The whole country rejoiced when Cromwell died, and his execution was the most popular of all the things that Henry VIII did in his long life.

Henry VIII himself died in 1547 and was followed by his boy son, Edward VI. Edward VI had been brought up as a Protestant, that is to say, as a member of the Reformed Church, and his ministers carried on the work of Cromwell. Now that the monasteries were suppressed, they suppressed those Guilds in the towns about which I have told you, and which did such splendid work for the English working people, on the plea that they were religious and anti-Protestant. Again the real reason was that these Guilds had saved up much money which Edward's ministers and their friends wanted for themselves. Edward VI only lived for a very little while, and after his death, his sister Mary became Queen of England. Mary was the daughter of Henry

VIII and Catherine of Aragon, and she had remained faithful to the old Catholic Church. She married Philip, the King of Spain, who was the principal Catholic king in Europe, and she was naturally anxious to restore the old religion in England. Henry VIII and the ministers of Edward VI had burnt and beheaded men and women who refused to accept the new religion, and now Mary, in her turn, burnt men and women who refused to give up the new religion for the old. Mary was really a kindly woman. Whatever may be said against her, she certainly loved her country. She was very sorry when the French re-took the town of Calais from the English (though, of course, Calais quite properly belonged to France), and she said that, when she died, the word "Calais" would be found written on her heart. Mary was always in weak health, and she was persuaded to be cruel to the Protestants because she thought it was her duty to suppress the new religion at all costs. Among the men who were burned were two bishops, called Latimer and Ridley, whom the people of England particularly loved. For a long time the common

people had not taken much more interest in the quarrel between the King and the Pope than they had taken years before in the Wars of the Roses, though most of the people were angry when the monasteries were shut up, and the town workers were still angrier when their Guilds were suppressed. The common people were quite willing that Mary should be their queen, and, because she had the support of the people, she easily suppressed an attempt to drive her from the throne and to make her cousin, Lady Jane Grey, queen in her place. The persecutions, however, and particularly the fear that Mary meant to make the English people subjects of the King of Spain, turned the majority in England from the old religion to the new. When Mary died, the reign of the great Queen Elizabeth began. Elizabeth was a Protestant, though she really did not care very much about religion one way or the other. She cared greatly for two things, first for her own power, and then for the greatness of her country, and to make herself powerful, and to make England great, Elizabeth never stopped at anything, however unjust or however mean

it might be. During her reign there was a great struggle between England and Spain as to which should be the first country in the world.

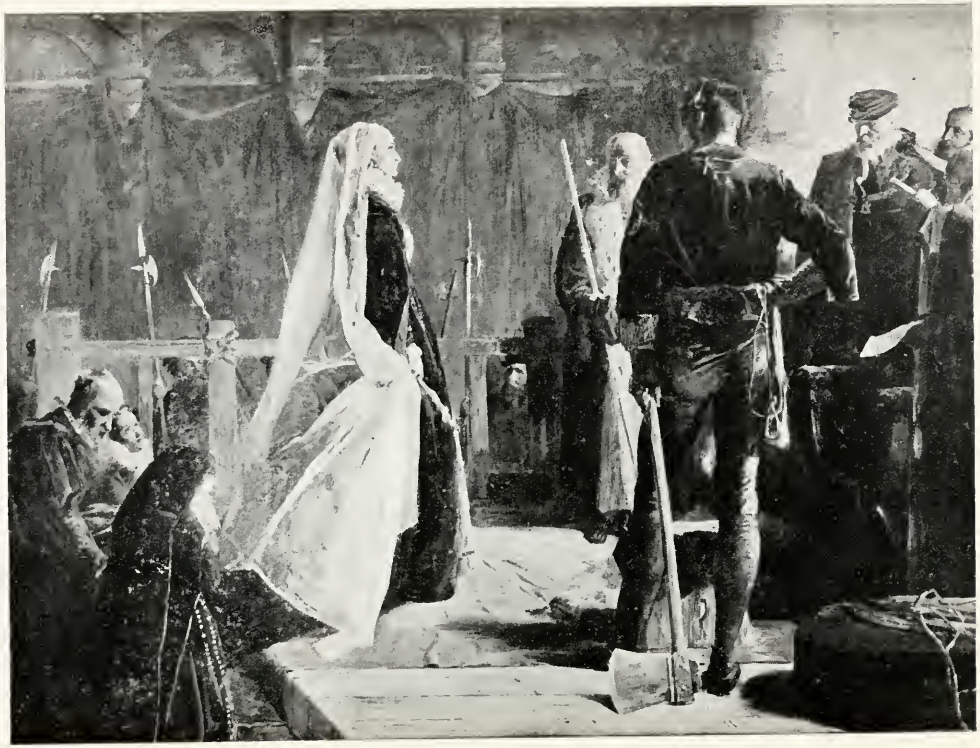
After Columbus had discovered America, numbers of fierce, brave soldiers crossed the Atlantic from Spain to the countries of South America, and there they founded a great Spanish empire. Ships continually crossed the ocean bringing cargoes of gold and precious stones to the King of Spain, who, since he owned the countries which we now call Holland and Belgium as well as Spain itself, was the richest and the most powerful king in the world. Englishmen have always been fine sailors, and in the days of Elizabeth there was a race of wonderful sailors in England, men like Francis Drake and Frobisher and Walter Raleigh, most of them born in Devonshire, who continually sailed westward in their little ships, founding English settlements on the coast of North America and fighting with the Spaniards and seizing their treasure-ships when they had the chance. You will understand that this sort of thing made very bad feeling between Spain and England, and the

feeling was made worse because Philip of Spain was the great Catholic king and Elizabeth of England was the great Protestant queen, although Elizabeth herself, as I have said, was not really religious at all. All through her reign, great Catholic nobles were among her advisers, although, as time went on, English feeling towards the Roman Catholics grew worse and worse, mainly because of the attempts made by certain wicked Catholics against the Queen's life.

While Elizabeth was reigning in England, Scotland was ruled by a queen called Mary Stuart. She had been married to a French king, and when her husband died, she went back to Edinburgh to be Queen of the Scots. Mary Stuart was a very pious Catholic, and a few of the Catholics in England (not all of them, nor indeed most of them) wanted to drive Elizabeth off the throne and make Mary the Queen of England. Mary Stuart was a beautiful young woman, but she was not very wise. When she went back from France to Scotland, she was quite young, and she found Scotland a hard country to govern. Most of the Scotch

people had become Protestants, and they were much fiercer than the Protestants in England. They hated Mary because she was a Catholic, and they were such queer people that they hated her a little more because she was beautiful. Unfortunately for herself, Mary did many foolish things. She married a weak young lord called Darnley, who grew jealous of Mary's Italian secretary Rizzio, and murdered him outside the Queen's door. This murder made Mary hate her husband, and when, in his turn, he was killed by another lord called Bothwell, Mary married the murderer. The Scotch were naturally offended by all this, and the Queen was obliged to fly from Scotland and take refuge in England. In England she became a great nuisance to Elizabeth and her ministers. For the reasons that I have already tried to explain to you, the English people, most of whom were still members of the Catholic Church at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, were gradually becoming Protestant. There were few Catholic priests left in the country. The parish churches were served by Protestant clergymen and the people began to accept

the new religion because they felt it was English. In the reign of Elizabeth, what is called the idea of nationality first became really strong. Men were proud that they were English, and they most valued the things that they could claim as English. Of course the idea of the Catholic Church is that it is universal, a thing that belongs to the people of all nations, but the people of Elizabethan England began to think that the Catholic Church was foreign and Spanish. A book, too, was published at this time which added to the popular feeling against the Catholics. It was called Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. It told the story of the burnings in the reign of Queen Mary, and it was eagerly read by the people all over the country. But though more and more people, particularly in the towns, were becoming Protestant, many still remained Catholics, and their faith was stimulated by Catholic missionaries who came over from the Continent to administer the sacraments and to encourage the faithful. It is unfortunately true that some of these missionaries plotted against the life of Queen Elizabeth, but most



MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS—THE END

Robert Herdman, R.S.A.

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of them were good and sincere men, and they were all very brave, often suffering martyrdom for their faith, exactly as the Protestant martyrs had suffered in the reign of Queen Mary.

When Mary Stuart came into England, she was at once regarded by some of the Catholics as their leader, and there was danger that there might be another war in England and that Elizabeth might be driven from the throne. So Mary Stuart was imprisoned in Fotheringay Castle, and after some time was tried for treason against Elizabeth and was beheaded. Elizabeth was persuaded with great difficulty to consent to the death of the beautiful and unfortunate Queen of Scotland, who was also her own cousin. Mary Stuart died very bravely. "Do not weep for me," she said to her ladies as she was going to the scaffold, "and tell all my friends that I die a good Catholic."

For a long time, King Philip of Spain had been planning to attack England in order to add our country to his already great dominions and to compel the English people

to return to the old religion. The execution of Mary Stuart, of course, made the Catholic people on the Continent very angry, and King Philip made up his mind to strike at England without further delay. In every seaport in Spain, thousands of men were busy for months preparing great ships to carry Philip's army to the shores of England. The start of the expedition, which was called the Great Armada, was hindered for a while by that splendid English sailor, Francis Drake, who had recently come home after sailing right round the world and, during this wonderful voyage in a tiny little ship, killing many Spaniards and seizing many Spanish treasure-ships. When Drake heard that Philip was preparing his Armada, he sailed along the coast of Spain with thirty small ships, "singeing the King of Spain's beard," which meant that he burnt many store-ships and attacked several ports.

At last, on July 31, 1588, the Spanish Armada was sighted off the Lizard in Cornwall. The Armada consisted of one hundred and thirty great ships, carrying two thousand five hundred cannons, eight thousand seamen and twenty

thousand soldiers. To oppose this great fleet, the English only had eighty ships, hardly any of which were equal in size to the smallest of the Spanish ships. King Philip had thought that when he arrived off the coast of England, all the English Catholics would join him. But the English Catholics loved England as much as the English Protestants did, and in the hour of danger they were found fighting for their own country. Indeed, Lord Howard of Effingham, the Admiral who commanded the English fleet, was himself a Catholic. With him were experienced fighting sailors like Francis Drake, and the crews of the English ships were all men who had spent their whole lives on the sea. I want you directly you have finished this chapter to read Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho*, in which you will find a perfectly splendid account of how Drake and his fellow-captains defeated the Armada and saved England. The English ships were light and were easily steered and managed. The Spanish ships were heavy and hard to steer. The English ships hung on the rear of the great fleet, attacking the heavy ships, one by one.

Then, in the night, the English sent eight fire-ships among the Spanish, and these caused a panic. The Spaniards cut their cables and drifted with the wind, while the English fired constantly on to their crowded decks, killing and wounding thousands of men. The fight went on right along the English Channel, and then the Spaniards steered northward, intending to make their way home by going round Scotland and Ireland into the Atlantic Ocean. When they reached the Orkney Islands, many Spanish ships were sunk or dashed on the rocks by a great storm, and only fifty of the hundred and thirty got back to Spain. The destruction of the Spanish fleet and the courage and skill of the English captains in the great fight in the English Channel were the beginning of England's mastery of the seas, and this, as I shall explain to you later on in this book, was the foundation on which the British Empire was built. You can imagine the rejoicings in England when the people heard that the Spaniards were destroyed, and how proud the people and the Queen were of the courage of the English sailors.

Elizabeth lived for fifteen years after the destruction of the Spanish Armada. Despite the greatness of her reign, she became a melancholy, bad-tempered old woman before she died. On one occasion one of her ministers told her that she *must* go to bed. "Must," exclaimed the old Queen angrily; "is must a word to be addressed to princes? Little man, little man, thy father if he had been alive dared not have used that word to me."

During the reign of Elizabeth, the English power in Ireland was strengthened by oppression and terror. Most of the people in Ireland were Catholics, but they had been so disheartened by the cruelty with which they had been treated by the English soldiers, that they did not attempt in any way to help King Philip when his Armada attacked the English. In the year 1610, the English Government declared that two-thirds of the land in the north of Ireland belonged to the English Crown. The people who lived on this land were driven away and it was divided among settlers from England and from Scotland. These settlers were the ancestors of the people whom we

call Ulstermen, who have always been fierce Protestants and who are different in race and religion to the rest of the people of Ireland. This settlement of English and Scotch Protestants in Ireland took place after the death of Elizabeth, but it was part of the policy which she had followed in governing the country. The people who had been driven away from their homes were angry and resentful, and I hope you will feel when you read about them that the hatred of the Irish for the English, which has caused so much trouble and suffering, has not been without cause. We have much to be proud of in our history, but I shall often have to tell you, before I finish this book, of things that happened in Ireland of which most English people are properly ashamed.

During the reign of Elizabeth, England grew wealthy and prosperous. The very poor people no longer had the monasteries to go to for help, but laws were passed which compelled each parish to provide funds to feed the workless and the hungry. This was something, though I expect the poor people much preferred the

SHAKESPEARE READING "MACBETH" TO QUEEN ELIZABETH

Ender

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human hospitality of the monks. The houses of the farmers and the merchants became much more comfortable at this time. Men began to put carpets on their floors and use pillows in their beds, and to drink out of pewter instead of out of wooden cups. Many of the working people, too, found employment in weaving cloth and worsted and in the iron manufactures of Kent and Sussex.

The age of Elizabeth is most glorious for the wonderful books that were written during the great Queen's reign. From the death of Chaucer until the time of Henry VIII, not one great book was written in England, but in the reign of Elizabeth there were scores of fine writers. Brave soldiers like Spenser and Philip Sidney and Walter Raleigh (who among other things was the first man to bring tobacco to England) were also poets. Homer's great story, the *Iliad*, which you will read one of these days, was translated into English poetry by a man called Chapman, and the reign was rich in men who wrote fine plays which were performed both before the Queen and before the common people. The greatest of these writers of plays

was William Shakespeare, the son of a butcher at Stratford-on-Avon, and the greatest poet who ever wrote in the English language. I have advised you to read two or three of Shakespeare's plays, and I can promise you that you will find them thrilling and exciting. Nowadays we remember Elizabeth largely because she was the friend of Shakespeare. A great writer is greater than a great queen, and the Stratford-on-Avon butcher's son has given immortality to the daughter of Henry VIII.

One of the greatest men who lived in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and who held high place in England after her death, was Francis Bacon, perhaps the cleverest man in England even in the great Elizabethan days. Indeed he was so great that some silly people have said that he must have written Shakespeare's plays. Bacon wrote some very wise books which you would not understand if you were to try and read them now. Perhaps you will read them when you grow to be men and women. He was a great lawyer and he became the chief of all the English judges, but although Bacon was so clever and wise, he was mean and dis-

honest, and his meanness and dishonesty led, in the end, to his losing his high offices. It is always a sad thing when a clever man, able to do great service to his country, is not also unselfish and good.

CHAPTER VI

THE STUARTS

When Elizabeth died, King James of Scotland, the son of Mary Queen of Scots, became King of England, and from this time England and Scotland have always had the same king. I told you, in the last chapter, that the people of England had been influenced by reading Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, but many more of them had been busy during the reign of Elizabeth reading the Bible, and one result of this was that many English people had become not only Protestant but Puritan. They believed that it was divinely settled before the birth of every child whether he or she should after death go to heaven or not. It was a terrible belief and it made the Puritans sad, stern people. They hated dancing and music and laughter and fun. They hated, too, all priests and bishops, and they had the same dislike of the Protestant clergymen as they had

of the Roman Catholic priests. Elizabeth was often angry with these Puritans and severely punished them, and King James disliked them even more.

James I was a curious man. The historian Green tells us of "his big head, his slobbering tongue, his quilted clothes, his rickety legs, his goggle eyes." He often got drunk. He was afraid of witches. He was always a coward, and though he wrote books and had much learning, he was well described by Henry IV, the great King of France, as "the wisest fool in Christendom." James I believed in two things. He believed in what is called "the divine right of kings," which means that the King is chosen by God and that it is a sin against God to oppose the King's will. He also believed in the divine right of bishops, and he thought that if there were no bishops there would be no king. Believing this, he, of course, had no patience with the Puritans, and he made things so uncomfortable for them that, in the year 1620, a little band of Puritans sailed away from England in a ship called the *Mayflower* and settled on the coast of North America, in order that they might make their

homes in a place far away from the King and where there were no bishops to trouble them. The settlement made by these "Pilgrim Fathers," as they were called, was the beginning of the great republic called the United States of America, the nation that speaks our English language and has now become one of the most important nations in the world.

The best thing that happened during the reign of James I was the translation of the Bible into English. This English translation is always called the "Authorised Version," and it is read every Sunday in most of the churches in England and America and, indeed, wherever the English language is spoken. A number of clever men helped to make the translation, which, as you know, is a very wonderful and beautiful book, the greatest possession of the English-speaking peoples.

Soon after James had come from Scotland to be King of England, an attempt was made by a few foolish Roman Catholics to blow up the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder, on the day when the King went to open Parliament, and in this way to kill both the King and his chief ministers. It was a foolish idea

and it was soon found out. One of the men in the plot was called Guy Fawkes, and it was intended that Parliament should be blown up on the fifth of November. So ever since, English boys and girls dress up dummies with old coats and hats on each November 5th, and call these figures " guys " after Guy Fawkes.

James's idea that kings are chosen by God soon made trouble with the Parliament, which said it had the right to advise and criticise the King. There were many rich Puritans in King James's Parliaments, and they were always against him. So the King tried to govern without a Parliament, and this made the English people very angry. The English people did not care to have a Scotsman as their King, they laughed at James for his clumsy appearance and they hated being governed without a Parliament. They were angry, too, with the King for his friendship for Spain, and this anger grew greater when he beheaded Sir Walter Raleigh, the last of the Elizabethan heroes, for trying to seize Spanish treasure-ships on his voyage home from America. The trouble that King James had stirred up grew much greater when he died

and his son, King Charles I, came to the throne. Charles I was a good, sincere and brave man, and there is no doubt that he was anxious to make the English people happy, but, unluckily for him, he did not understand England. You know how one man can ride a horse and make it do everything that he wants, and that if another man gets on his back the horse will at once throw him off. It is exactly the same with nations. Queen Elizabeth understood the English, and she always knew how to get her own way with them without making them her enemies. But neither James I nor Charles I understood the English at all. Like his father, Charles I believed with all his heart in the divine right of kings. At the beginning of his reign, he had a favourite minister called the Duke of Buckingham. Parliament disliked the Duke of Buckingham and wanted his power to be taken away from him. When he heard this, the King wrote a letter to Parliament in which he said: "I must let you know that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned among you, much less such as are of eminent place and near to me." Soon after this, Buckingham was

killed at Portsmouth by a fierce young Puritan called Felton. You can read all about Felton and this Duke of Buckingham in an exciting book called *The Three Musketeers*, written by the great French writer, Dumas.

I want you to try and understand exactly the quarrel that was now beginning between the English King and the English Parliament. The King believed that he had been chosen by God to rule England, that he was "the Lord's anointed." He also believed in the English Church. One of his greatest friends was Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and both Laud and the King believed in the English Church just as Queen Mary had believed in the Roman Catholic Church. They believed that God meant every Englishman and every Englishwoman to belong to the Church and to obey its bishops. The bishops and the Church supported the King. They said he was quite right when he said that he was chosen by God, and that therefore the men in Parliament were committing a grievous sin when they opposed the King's will. On the other hand, the Parliament was largely made up of Puritans. These Puritans were

country gentlemen and well-to-do merchants. They said that it was nonsense to say that kings and bishops were chosen by God, and that it was for Parliament to decide what laws should be made and what taxes should be paid. The great majority of the English people, the men who worked in the fields and in the factories and workshops in the towns, did not take much interest in the quarrel. Very few of them were Puritans, and they certainly hated the Puritan desire to take all their pleasures away from them. They may not have been for the King, but they certainly were not for the Puritan Parliament. If you remember all this, you will find it easy to understand what I am now going to tell you.

The King determined to rule without the help of Parliament and to force the people to pay taxes without first obtaining the Parliament's consent. Two men helped him in this attempt of his to establish what people call "absolute government." One was Archbishop Laud, the other was the Earl of Strafford. The Earl of Strafford, when he was only called Sir Thomas Wentworth, had himself been a

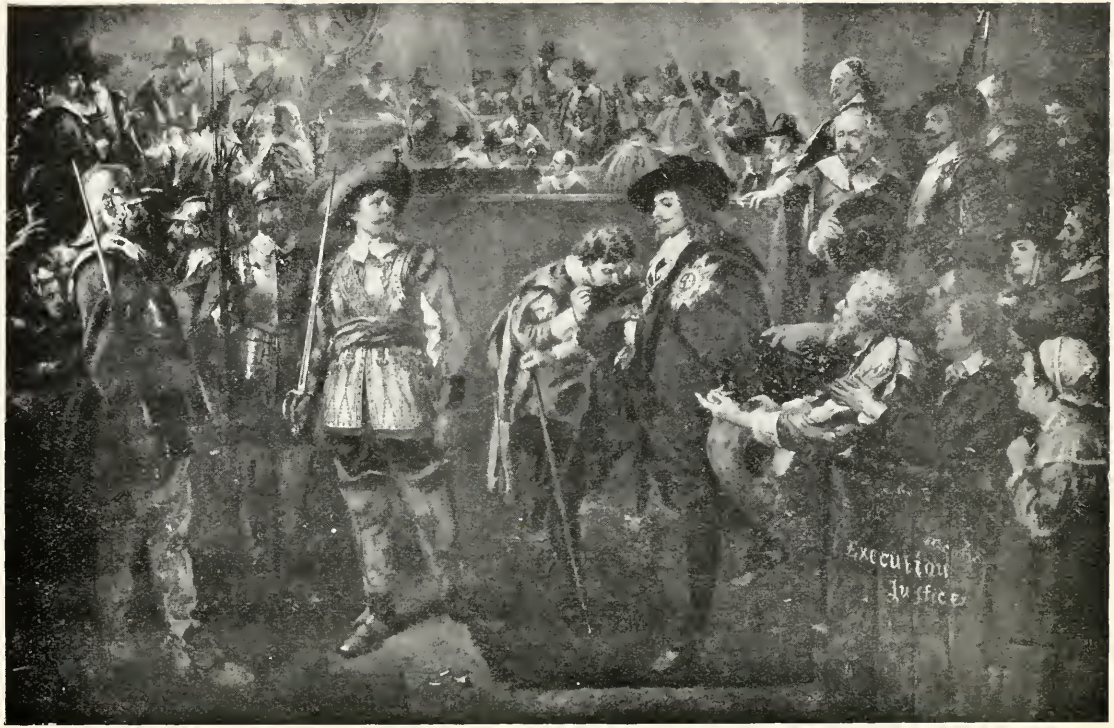
member of the House of Commons, and when he went over from the side of the Parliament to the side of the King, one of the Puritans said to him: "You have left us, Sir Thomas, but we will never leave you while you have a head on your shoulders." The King first sent Strafford to Ireland, where he made the people of the north prosperous by teaching them how to make linen, and where he forced both the Catholics and the Protestants to obey the King's law. Strafford's motto was "thorough," which meant that he did not believe in doing things by halves. When he left Ireland, the country was quiet and obedient and he had raised and trained an army there ready for the King's use. In England, Parliament was getting more and more angry. The members were angry with the King because he forced the country gentlemen and the town merchants to pay taxes to him. They were angry with Strafford because they thought he meant to bring Irish soldiers into England, and they were angrier still with Archbishop Laud because he tried to make all the people go to church, because he had shut up the Puritan chapels, and mainly because he said

that people ought to be allowed to play games on Sunday afternoon if they went to church on Sunday morning. The Puritans thought of Sunday as the Jews think of their Sabbath, and to them it was a very wicked thing to play games on any part of the day. Most people nowadays will agree with Archbishop Laud in this one thing anyhow, although it is only in this year (1922), two hundred and seventy-seven years after the death of Archbishop Laud, that games have been allowed on Sunday in the London parks. In the year 1641, Parliament arrested Strafford and compelled the King, who was sometimes easily frightened and who could never be counted on to stand by his friends, to consent to his execution. The next year, the King ordered the arrest of five members of the House of Commons, but they took refuge in the City of London and the citizens refused to give them up. This was the signal for the beginning of war. The King had on his side most of the gentry in the north and the west of England, and his army was led by his nephew, a dashing young soldier, called Prince Rupert. The Parliament had on its side the wealthy merchants

of London and the seaports in the south-east, and many of the country gentry, who lived in the same part of England, whose grandfathers had been made rich by the sacking of the monasteries. The common working people remained for the most part on neither side, though many of the country folk went with the squires to fight with the King, and many of the workers and shopmen of the towns went with their masters to fight for the Parliament. At the beginning, the King's army won most of the battles. It was made up of gallant young gentlemen who knew how to fight and how to ride, and who easily defeated the opposing army, made up of raw recruits and "base and mean fellows." After a while, however, the Parliamentary army found a clever general in a man called Oliver Cromwell, who came from Huntingdon, where he had been a farmer and a brewer. Cromwell organised what he called the "New Model" army, in which all the soldiers were stern Puritans, who sang hymns as they marched, never drank or swore, obeyed their officers, and were certain to go on fighting until they had killed their enemies or were killed themselves. These

soldiers, who were called Roundheads, were the best soldiers in the world, and they soon changed the fortunes of the war. The King's army was defeated first at Marston Moor and then at a place called Naseby.

While Archbishop Laud was trying to force the whole of England to belong to the Church of England, and to accept the authority of its bishops, he also tried to compel the Scotch people, who were nearly all Puritans and hated the English bishops quite as much as they hated the Roman Pope, to do the same thing, and to use the English Book of Common Prayer in all their services. Laud was even less successful in Scotland than he was in England. One Sunday, when the Dean of Edinburgh opened his Prayer Book in St. Giles's Cathedral, a woman in the congregation, called Jenny Geddes, threw a stool at his head, and this was the beginning of the end. The Scotch made a Solemn League and Covenant not to have bishops in their land, and they kept this covenant in spite of punishment and persecution. I want you to notice one difference between England and Scotland. In Scotland the poor people were really Puritans, and it was a poor



CHARLES I AFTER HIS TRIAL

Sir J. Gilbert, R.A.

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woman who threw the stool at the Dean of Edinburgh. In England, most of the Puritans were the well-to-do people, and it was the rich country squires who refused to pay the taxes demanded by the King without the consent of Parliament.

The Scotch people were on the side of the Parliament when war broke out, but they did not take any part in the fighting, though a Scotch army was encamped on the border waiting to see what happened. Before this, there had been some fighting in Scotland itself between the Royalists and the people who sided with the Parliament. After he had lost the battle of Naseby, Charles hurried north and took refuge with the Scotch. He did this because the Scotch Puritans and the English Puritans were not very good friends. The Scotch Puritans were what is called Presbyterians and the soldiers in Cromwell's army were Independents, and the Presbyterians and Independents hated each other almost as much as they both hated the Roman Catholics and the members of the Church of England. I am sure that you will think that it is a strange thing that religion, which ought to make

men love each other, so often seems to make them hate each other instead.

If Charles had agreed to sign the Covenant, the Scotch would have supported him against Cromwell and his army, but the King stood firm. He believed in the Church of England and he would not give up his faith. So the Scotch sold him to Cromwell for a large sum of money, and after being in prison for some time he was given a mock trial, his judges being a handful of extreme Puritans, and he was beheaded on January 30, 1649, on a scaffold erected outside a window of the banqueting-room of the palace of Whitehall in London. Almost exactly four years before the Puritans had executed Archbishop Laud. I cannot tell you that Charles I was a wise king, but we can certainly admire him for refusing to save his life by changing his faith. He is sometimes called the Martyr King, and I think you will agree that he earned this splendid title. Anyhow, he died like a brave, God-fearing man. I ought to tell you that the Scotch were very much ashamed of having sold the King to Cromwell and that they afterwards invaded England in an attempt to

save him, but the Scotch army was defeated by Cromwell in a battle fought at Preston in Lancashire.

For ten years after the death of Charles I, Oliver Cromwell was the ruler of England. It is a curious thing that the English allowed Charles I to be executed because he wanted to rule without Parliament, and then that they should have allowed themselves to be ruled for ten years without a Parliament by a brewer from Huntingdon. When the Parliament began to interfere with Cromwell, he marched some soldiers into the House of Commons, drove the members out, and pointing to the mace, which is always (as you will probably one day see for yourselves) on the table in front of the Speaker, said to one of the soldiers: "Take away that bauble." After that Parliament met no more, and Cromwell ruled England with the title of Lord Protector. The difference between Charles I and Cromwell was that one was a weak man and the other was a strong man, and Cromwell had a well-trained army ready to obey his orders and to force the people also to obey. This army defeated the eldest son of Charles I at the battle of Worcester,

after which the Prince had to hide himself in an oak tree until he could escape from the country, and after this, Cromwell was the absolute master of England until his death.

In the year 1649, the Irish Catholics, taking advantage of the troubles in England, demanded separation from this country, and at the same time some of the Irish lords raised an army to fight for young Prince Charles. Cromwell immediately took his Roundhead army over to Ireland and suppressed the rebellion with a cruelty and thoroughness that even Strafford would hardly have attempted. Town after town was taken and the garrisons and the priests killed. The Irish were driven away into the west of the country and their land was given to Cromwell's soldiers. The Irish who resisted were either hanged or sold as slaves to foreign countries, and to this day the Irish people remember the name of Cromwell with bitter hatred.

Although Cromwell had to depend on the support of his Puritan soldiers, he himself was anxious that there should be "liberty of conscience" in England, which means that everyone should be allowed to worship God in

his own way. With the help of a great sailor called Admiral Blake, Cromwell defeated the Dutch (who, before their defeat, had actually sailed up the Thames), and thus strengthened the English mastery of the seas which began, as I have told you, with the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Cromwell died in 1658. He was strong and at times cruel, sincere, an Englishman who really loved England. Even those who disagree with him must feel some pride in his character and determination. While Cromwell lived, other countries feared and respected England, and at his command persecutions of Protestants in other countries at once ceased.

When Cromwell died the people of England had grown very weary of the Puritans and their constant interference with the harmless pleasures of everyday life. For a few months, Richard Cromwell, Cromwell's son, was Lord Protector in his father's place, and then the Parliament and General Monk, who commanded the Roundhead army, agreed that what was called the Commonwealth should come to an end and that King Charles's son should be asked to come back to England and be King.

Prince Charles, or Charles II as he now became, landed at Dover in May, 1660. He was welcomed with great joy by the mass of the common people, who hoped that the sad times were over and that England would be allowed to be "Merrie England" once again. Charles II was thirty years old when he came back home. He was very tired of being a poor exile, and he made up his mind to have a good time now that he was King. He soon became known as the "Merry Monarch." He loved pleasure and he hated trouble. He was very good-natured, and he was clever enough not to quarrel with his people as his father had done. Unfortunately, Charles was not an honourable man, and when he wanted money to pay for his pleasures, he did not care in the least how he got it. He could only get a limited amount from Parliament, and so he made arrangements with the French King, Louis XIV, that France should give him money and that in return he should send English soldiers to fight for the French King whenever he wanted them. I think you will agree with me that it was a horrid thing for our country thus to be made the servant of the French King.

During the reign of Charles II, thousands of people died in London from a great plague, and in the next year a large part of the City of London was burnt down in a great fire. This great fire was not altogether a bad thing, since a large number of old unhealthy houses were destroyed and better houses were built in their place. There was still a great deal of fear of the Roman Catholics in England, and this fear led a cunning rascal called Titus Oates to pretend that the Roman Catholics were plotting to kill Charles II and to make his brother James, who was himself a Roman Catholic, king in his place. Many innocent people suffered through Oates's wickedness, and you will be glad to know that Oates was at last found out and very properly hanged.

At the beginning of the reign of Charles II, the Puritans were forbidden to hold their religious services, and many of them, including John Bunyan, the wonderful Bedfordshire tinker who wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress*, were put in prison. In 1672 the King granted liberty of public worship to everyone except the Roman Catholics, who were allowed only to practise their religion in private houses.

A very important Act of Parliament called the Habeas Corpus Act was passed during the reign of Charles II. By this Act English people are protected from being kept in prison unless they have had a fair trial and have been proved to be guilty of some crime. Just before his death, an attempt was made by some of the leaders of the people, who thought that England would be happier if it had no king, to kill Charles II. This attempt is called the Rye House Plot, but Charles escaped and soon afterwards died in his bed, politely apologising for taking such a long time in dying. Just before his death he admitted that for some time he had been a member of the Roman Catholic Church. Charles married a Portuguese princess, whose dowry was the city of Bombay in India, and this was the beginning of England's Indian Empire.

Charles was followed by his brother James II, who, as I told you, was a Roman Catholic. The English people hated the idea of having a Roman Catholic king, and many of them supported the young Duke of Monmouth in an attempt to drive James from the throne. Monmouth utterly failed, his troops were

defeated in a battle in the west of England, and the King sent a brutal judge called Jeffries to hold mock trials of the people who had sympathised with the rebels and to hang as many of them as possible. This naturally made James still more hated than he was before. Two years afterwards, he ordered the arrest of the Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops who had petitioned the King to withdraw an order he had made protecting the Roman Catholics and the Puritans. When the bishops were taken to the Tower, the people of London and even the soldiers who guarded them knelt down and asked them for their blessing, and when they were tried and acquitted the whole country and even the army openly rejoiced. From this James learned that the people of England would not have him for their king, and he and his family left St. James's Palace secretly and escaped to France in the year 1688. With this escape, the reign of the Stuart kings came to an end. Shortly before he hurried away from London, a son had been born to King James in St. James's Palace, but many of the English people refused to believe that this boy was really the King's

son and said that it was somebody else's baby altogether and that it had been smuggled into the palace in a warming-pan.

Just as I told you that Shakespeare was the greatest man who lived in the age of Queen Elizabeth, so now I tell you that John Milton, the famous poet who wrote *Paradise Lost*, one of the half-dozen greatest poets who ever lived in the world, was the most splendid figure in England during the time of the Stuart kings. John Milton was Cromwell's Latin secretary, but, though he was a Puritan, he did not share the usual Puritan hatred of beautiful things and he always wanted everybody in England to be free to think for himself and to believe for himself. John Milton was a very brave man. Towards the end of his life he went quite blind, but even blindness could not effect the calmness and determination of his spirit. Another of the great men of the time was John Bunyan, whom I have already mentioned. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* has been read by more English people than any book except the Bible, and you will think that it is a wonderful thing that such a book should have been written by a tinker.

The first newspaper was published in England in these times; the English navy was made better and stronger, thanks largely to the energy of Samuel Pepys, whose diary I hope you will read one of these days; and science in England made great progress through the work of men like Sir Isaac Newton, who discovered what is called gravitation, which means that the earth is a sort of magnet which draws everything within a certain distance to itself. Sir Isaac discovered gravitation by having an apple fall on his head while he was sitting and reading in his orchard.

CHAPTER VII

THE DUTCH KING

The Tudor kings were descended from a Welsh squire; the Stuart kings were Scotch, and when James II, the last of the Stuarts, fled from England to France, the English Parliament chose a Dutchman to be the English king. His name was William of Orange and he was chosen to be King of England because his wife, Mary, was the eldest daughter of James II, and both William and Mary were Protestants. William of Orange was a quiet, grave man, very cold in his manner and not a man whom it was easy to love or even to like. From his boyhood he had been very sickly. His face was pale and he was always suffering from a very bad cough. He cared nothing about books or pictures, but he was very brave and very clever, and he was able to rule men almost as successfully as Elizabeth. Holland, which was William's own country and perhaps

the only thing that he really loved, was inhabited by a stubborn people, in many respects like the English, who wanted to be independent and were not willing to allow any foreign king to rule them. For many years Louis XIV, the great King of France, had tried hard to add Holland to his other dominions, and the Dutch, led by William of Orange, had bravely resisted. The one object of William's life was to defeat the plans of the French king. And when the English Parliament invited him to come over from Holland with his wife and be king in the place of James II, he accepted the invitation, not because he wanted to live in England and rule the English people, but because, by becoming King of England, he could secure the help of the English army in the never-ending fight against Louis XIV. Most people in England warmly welcomed William of Orange, whom we will now call William III. But the Highlanders in the north of Scotland, most of whom were Roman Catholics, at first refused to accept the new king. After a while, however, most of them agreed to take an oath of obedience to William, and this very much annoyed a cruel Scotsman

called John Dalrymple, who hated the Highlanders and who hoped that there would be some fighting and that his enemies would be killed. One of the Highland chiefs, called Macdonald of Glencoe, put off taking the oath of obedience for a few days, and Dalrymple made this an excuse for a dreadful murder. He sent some of his soldiers into the valley where the Macdonalds lived, and one morning at daybreak the soldiers attacked the Macdonalds without warning and killed over thirty of them. The rest escaped to the mountains, where most of them died of hunger and cold.

William agreed that the Scotch should have a Church of their own without the bishops, whom they so much disliked, but he annoyed the Scotch very much by refusing to allow them to persecute people belonging to other Christian churches. He said to them that he did not believe that cruelty and violence would ever help "to the advancing of true religion."

You may remember that I told you that James II had prepared an army in Ireland in case he should have trouble in England and that in all the Irish towns he had given power

WILLIAM III AT THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE

Benjamin West, P.R.A.

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and authority to the Roman Catholics. After James fled to France and William had arrived in England, the Catholics in Ireland at once rose and plundered the property of the few Protestants who lived among them. James, himself, hurried to Dublin and, with a large Irish army, marched against the Protestants of Ulster who lived in the north and who were naturally on William's side. The Irish army laid siege to the town of Londonderry, but even when the people in the town began to die of hunger, they refused to surrender, and after a siege of a hundred and five days they were relieved by an English ship. Soon after this, William crossed to Ireland and a great battle was fought between the English army under William and an Irish and French army under James on the banks of the river Boyne. Thanks mainly to the cowardice of James, the English army won the battle and the Irish, who were quite as brave as the English, were furiously angry with their king. "Change kings with us," an Irish officer said to an Englishman, "and we will willingly fight you again." William did not have it all his own way in Ireland. Led by a brave man called

Patrick Sarsfield, the Irish held the town of Limerick for months against the English attacks, and, in order to bring the war in Ireland to an end, William promised that the Roman Catholics in Ireland should be allowed the free exercise of their religion. This promise was never kept. Sarsfield knew it would never be kept and he, with ten thousand of his soldiers, left Ireland for France to fight for the French king in his many wars. The wives and mothers and daughters of these Irish soldiers loudly wailed and cried as they watched the ships sailing away from their country. They were crying because they never expected to see the men whom they loved again. They were crying, too, for their unhappy country. There was no more trouble in Ireland for nearly a hundred years, but the Irish people had become little more than slaves of their English masters.

In the year 1692, the English navy beat the French in the battle of La Hogue, and this was one more step towards the English mastery of the sea about which I have told you. In 1702, William died as a result of a fall from his horse. His wife, Mary, had died of small-pox eight years before. Apart from the war with

France, about which the English people cared very little, two important things happened during William's reign. The English people had had so much trouble with their kings that when William was invited to come over and reign in England, the English Parliament made it clear what an English king could do and what he could not do. And this was all written out in an Act of Parliament so that there should be no more trouble and no more mistakes. It was decided that the King must never demand taxes or keep an army without the consent of Parliament, that the English people should choose whom they liked as members of Parliament, that nobody should be punished without a fair trial, and that the King should never interfere with Parliament when it was considering matters that affected the prosperity and happiness of the people. Towards the end of William's reign, Parliament also decided that no Roman Catholic could ever be King of England again and that "the King must not leave England without consent of Parliament nor force this realm to go to war in defence of any foreign country."

While William was king, England saw

the beginning of what is called the "Party System." Most Englishmen who take a proper interest in their country belong to one or other of the political parties, and if you ask your fathers, when you have read this page, to what party they belong, they will tell you either to the Conservative, Liberal, or Labour Party, for there are three parties in England to-day. In the England of William and Mary there were only two parties, the Whigs and the Tories. The Whigs consisted of the rich men whose fortunes had first been made when Henry VIII sacked the monasteries. They believed that the King was only king because Parliament allowed him to be king, and that it was the Parliament and not the King who ought to be chief ruler of the country. The Tories believed that the King was greater than the Parliament. The Tories, too, were devoted to the Church and believed that the bishops of the Church ought to have great power in the country. In the days before William, the King always chose what men he liked to be chief ministers. But William thought that it would be easier to govern England if his ministers were liked by the Parliament. You understand, of course,

that the members of the House of Commons are chosen by the English people, and the people do not always chose the same men. Nowadays they sometimes prefer the Liberals, they sometimes prefer the Conservatives, and, sometimes, they prefer Labour men. Similarly in the old days, sometimes they preferred the Whigs, and sometimes they preferred the Tories. And from the party that is strongest in the House of Commons, the English King always chooses his ministers.

When William died and Queen Anne, his wife's sister, began her reign, the greatest man in England was the Duke of Marlborough. He was one of the most curious men who have ever played a great part in the history of our country. He was very brave, and was perhaps the greatest general that England ever had. He was patient, merciful and kind-hearted, but he was, at the same time, absolutely without what men call a sense of honour. He would break his word and betray his friends if he thought it would be a good thing for himself to do so, and he loved money so much that he did not care in the least how he got it. This strange man was a great favourite of James II.

But this did not prevent him from going over to William and telling the new King all the old King's secrets. Afterwards, when people in England grew weary of William's constant wars, and some of them thought that it would be a good thing to have James II back again, Marlborough became a traitor once more and this time told William's secrets to James. William found out all about this, and he took all Marlborough's high offices away from him and would not have him at his Court. But when he knew that he was dying, he felt that Marlborough was the only man in England who could help Anne to govern the country, and in his will he advised her always to take Marlborough's advice. Queen Anne was very willing to do this because the Duchess of Marlborough was her greatest friend. So great indeed was their friendship that they forgot their rank when they were together and called each other "Mrs. Freeman" and "Mrs. Morley." I ought to tell you that perhaps the best thing about Marlborough was his love for his wife. She had an extremely bad temper and she finally lost the Queen's friendship by losing her temper and violently

abusing her, but she always kept her husband's love, and even in the midst of great battles he used to find time to write letters to her.

Marlborough determined to carry on the war against France which William III had waged for so many years. The people of England wanted peace, but many of them were very angry with the King of France because he pretended that James II was still King of England, and because he was always ready to help the Jacobites, as James's friends were called, to make fresh attempts to bring James back and to start more trouble and more fighting in England. Marlborough arranged a great league of the nations against France in order to prevent the French king from being the master of the whole continent of Europe. In the army that Marlborough commanded there were soldiers from England, Holland, Denmark, Austria and many parts of Germany, and you will not be surprised when I tell you that Marlborough had all kinds of trouble to prevent these soldiers from quarrelling with each other and to persuade their rulers to allow him to do what he knew was best. But, as I have said, he was always patient and he was

never discouraged, and at last he contrived to get his own way. Then he led his army against the French and their allies the Bavarians, and on August 13, 1704, he completely defeated them at the battle of Blenheim, killing twelve thousand of the enemy and taking fourteen thousand of them prisoners. This was the first battle that Louis XIV had ever lost. The French king was obliged to take all his soldiers out of Germany and to allow the Germans to rule themselves, and the Dutch people living in Holland had no more fear of becoming the mere slaves of the French king. Sometimes it is difficult to see what good comes from battles and victories, but some good did come from the great victory of Blenheim. The English people were very proud of Marlborough's cleverness, and as a reward Parliament gave him the palace of Blenheim outside Oxford, which still belongs to the Dukes of Marlborough. The Duke followed up Blenheim with another defeat of the French at a place called Ramillies, and a few years afterwards the war came to an end with a peace treaty signed at Utrecht, by which, among other things, England obtained the Rock of Gibraltar.

In the later years of the reign of Queen Anne, England and Scotland were finally united, and it was agreed that instead of there being one Parliament in London and one Parliament in Scotland, the Scotch lords should sit in the House of Lords in London and there should be Scotch members in the English House of Commons. Great care was taken that the Scotch should lose none of their liberties and that the English should not force their Church on to the Scotch, who still preferred to be Presbyterian. This union of Scotland and England has been a good thing for both countries. The Scotch lost nothing and they gained great prosperity through their friendly joining with the largest of the three countries that make our island.

Queen Anne died in 1714. She had a son who died before his mother, so, after Queen Anne's death, the English had, once again, to find a king outside their own country.

While William was king, a number of English merchants joined together to buy from the people of India and sell to them. They called themselves the East India Company, and the King agreed to protect them from foreigners and

not to allow the trading stations which they built in India to be destroyed. The East India Company soon became very rich and powerful, and it is to this Company that England owes her Indian Empire.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST THREE GEORGES

When Queen Anne died in 1714, the Crown passed to a German, the Elector or King of Hanover, who reigned in England as George I. The English Parliament chose George I as king because he was a Protestant. He was the grandson of a sister of Charles I and therefore a great-grandson of James I. Queen Anne, herself, and a large number of the people of England would have much preferred that the son of James II, who was living in exile at St. Germain in France, should have been the next king, but this prince was a Roman Catholic, and, as I daresay you will remember, Parliament had made a law that no Roman Catholic should ever be King of England. There were some people in England, however, who still wanted the son of James II to rule over them. They were the Jacobites, and after George I had arrived in England, a few Jacobite noblemen in

Lancashire and in the north of Scotland rebelled against the new King. The people, however, were against them; they were easily defeated and their leaders were put to death.

George I was always a German. He did not very much want to be King of England, and whenever he had the chance, he hurried back to Germany, which was really his own country, and which he loved very much. Long before he came to England, he had quarrelled with his wife, whom he had put into prison, and she was kept there until her death thirty-two years afterwards. George I brought with him to England German servants, German secretaries and negroes whom he had captured while fighting against the Turks. None of the German ladies in his Court were very pretty. One of them was so fat that the English people called her the Elephant, and another was so tall and thin that she was called the Maypole.

Long before the death of Queen Anne, the English people had grown very tired of wars, and though they were very proud of Marlborough's victories, they hated paying the heavy taxes which always have to be paid when nations make wars, whether those wars

are lost or won. The man in England, at this time, who most clearly understood how badly the country wanted peace was a great statesman called Robert Walpole, who was at the head of the English Government for nearly thirty years. Walpole was always in favour of peace, because, as he once said, "we must be losers while war lasts and cannot be great gainers when it ends." Walpole was really a country squire. He was a stout man, who loved horses and hunting and eating and drinking, and who cared nothing about books. He was very good-humoured, very kind-hearted, and he certainly always tried to do his best for his country.

George I died in Germany and Walpole had to go to Richmond to tell the old King's son, George II, that he was now king. The new King was fast asleep, but Walpole woke him up, and this made him so angry that, when he heard the news, he merely shouted at Walpole in his funny German-English : "Dat is one big lie." George II, like his father, was always a German. He was a fat little man, not very clever and with a very bad temper, but he was a brave man and a good soldier, and his wife

was kind and gentle and, for her sake, the people of England were quite friendly to her husband. George II reigned in England for thirty-three years. During the first part of his reign, thanks to Walpole, England was at peace with all the world. Then wars began again. First of all England became mixed up with a war on the Continent, which is interesting to us because this war was the beginning of the greatness of Prussia, which was then ruled by a king called Frederick the Great. In those days Germany was divided into a number of countries, each with a king or a prince of its own, just as England was divided into a number of little countries in the times of the Anglo-Saxons. Frederick the Great wanted to make Prussia the master of all the other German countries, and he managed to do this by wars and by many plots and lies. The task that he began was continued many years afterwards by other Prussian rulers until, a few years ago, Prussia became one of the most powerful countries in Europe, and all Germany obeyed the orders of the Prussian king. Then the Prussian king, who had become German Emperor, wanted to be master of the whole of

Europe, and this led to the Great War, in which so many brave Englishmen were killed and which finished only four years ago.

Nothing of much importance to England happened during the war on the Continent in the reign of George II, although the English lost a battle at a place called Fontenoy. Soon after this war was finished, the Jacobites made another attempt to bring back the Stuart king, but although they fought very bravely, they were defeated in a battle fought at a place called Culloden. The Jacobite Prince who lost this battle was called Bonnie Prince Charlie because he was so good-looking, and one of these days you must read about the thrilling adventures that Bonnie Prince Charlie had after the battle of Culloden and how he finally succeeded in escaping from Scotland to France.

I expect that you know that the great country of India, away in the south of Asia, has belonged for many years to the British Empire and has been governed by English rulers who make laws for the people and do the best they can to make them happy and content. I have already told you how the English rule in India began.

In the time of George II, part of India belonged to France and part to England, and there was a long, bitter struggle as to which country should be the master of the Indians. Fortunately for England she had in India, at that time, a very clever soldier called Robert Clive, and thanks to the victories that he won over the French, the power of France in India was destroyed.

At the same time as the English were fighting the French for the mastery of India, they were also fighting the French for the mastery of Canada. Both Englishmen and Frenchmen had crossed the Atlantic Ocean to make new homes for themselves in Canada, but instead of living peacefully together, they were always quarrelling, and at last they began to fight to decide whether Canada should be ruled by the French king or the English king. Both sides had made friends with different tribes of Red Indians, and when the fighting began some of the Red Indians fought for the English and others for the French. The French were led by a splendid general called Montcalm, and the English were led by a brave general called Wolfe, and the quarrel was finally decided at a battle fought at the Heights of

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Abraham outside the town of Quebec. The English won the battle and the French were afterwards forced to take away all their soldiers from Canada, and to agree that Canada should be English. Unhappily, General Wolfe was killed by a bullet that pierced his breast just at the moment of victory. "The French are running," said one of his officers to the dying general. "Then," said Wolfe, "I die happy."

Although the French soldiers in Canada went back to France, the Frenchmen who had settled with their families on the land, and had built themselves cottages and ploughed the fields, went on living and working in the country, and they have stayed there to this day, quite content to be living in an English Dominion and at peace with their English-speaking neighbours. These people are called French Canadians, and when the Great War began, thousands of them came across the Atlantic with the Canadian army to fight with the French and the English against the Germans. These French Canadians have always been treated fairly by the English, and their loyal friendship is the reward that the English have received for being just and fair.

You will remember that I told you that Robert Walpole hated war, and you will therefore not be surprised that he had ceased to be the head of the English Government before the beginning of all the fighting which gave India and Canada to England. Walpole was followed by another great man called William Pitt, a proud, honest, courageous man who loved England dearly and whose one idea was to make his country powerful. Pitt always chose exactly the right man for every hard thing that had to be done, and it was he who chose Wolfe, then a young man of thirty years old, to go out to Canada to win that country for the English. During the years of peace that Walpole had given to England, the people had become rich and careless of the safety of their nation. Pitt feared that, if England was not ready, she might be conquered by France, and he therefore fought France, as we have seen, in India and in Canada and he made friends with Frederick the Great of Prussia, and then he fought France at sea and on the continent of Europe. In the same year in which Wolfe beat Montcalm at Quebec, the English beat the French at the battle of Minden, and the English

fleet beat the French fleet during a raging storm off the French coast. In the year after these victories George II died and his grandson George III became king.

George III was a very simple, kind man. He lived a homely life at Windsor Castle with his wife, Queen Charlotte. He always went to church on Sundays, he loved his children and he always tried to do his duty to the country. He was so simple and kind that people called him "Farmer George." The first two Georges were Germans who, as I have told you, could hardly speak English, but George III was an Englishman and he wanted nothing so much as to make England prosperous and happy. Unfortunately, George III was very silly and very obstinate and, though he was so kind-hearted and so anxious to do good, through his obstinacy and his silliness he managed to do a great deal of harm to England during his long reign of sixty years. From the time of Queen Elizabeth, people had gone from England to America and had made their homes in that country. As the number of the settlers increased, the country was divided into States, all of which were on the eastern

shore of the continent, but it was not until many years afterwards that men cut their way through the forests and built towns and cities in the middle of the country and in the far west. These English colonists, as they were called, still obeyed the English king and they always thought of England as their old home. The English Government thought that these English colonists in America ought to pay taxes for the upkeep of the English army and the English navy, but the Americans, who had their own affairs to look after and their own dangers to meet, refused to pay the taxes and, for five years, there was a quarrel between the mother country and these English people thousands of miles away in America. Among other taxes which the English Government had asked the colonists to pay, was a tax on tea, and, in order to get as much money as possible, the English Government sent some ships full of tea to the port of Boston, ordering the colonists to buy the tea and to pay the tax on it. This so enraged the colonists that when the ships had anchored at Boston, a crowd of men dressed up as Red Indians went on board, tied up the sailors and threw all the tea, which

was worth 18,000 pounds, into the harbour. When the English Government heard of this, an Act of Parliament was passed to punish the colonists and a number of soldiers were immediately sent to America. But the Americans had a great leader in a man called George Washington, a gallant gentleman whom everyone trusted and loved. Washington found it hard at first to make soldiers out of the farmers and merchants. But George III helped him by doing a very silly thing. I ought to tell you that William Pitt, who had been made the Earl of Chatham, was no longer England's chief minister, and poor foolish George III had no wise man to prevent him from making mistakes. He thought it would be a good idea to hire Germans to fight against the English colonists in America, and a large number of Germans, called Hessians, half-savage men who could not speak a word of English, were shipped across the Atlantic. The coming of the Germans filled the colonists with anger and with fear, and all the young men hurried to Washington, joined his army and worked hard to make themselves into good soldiers. At the same time, the chief men in the various

American States which the English colonists had created, met together in the town of Philadelphia and signed an agreement which was called the Declaration of Independence. In this agreement they said that they were no longer Englishmen but Americans, that they would no longer obey the English king, but that they would have a country of their own with its own government, and that this country should be called the United States of America. In the first battles that were fought, the English soldiers, with the Germans whom George III had sent to America, easily defeated the Americans, but the Americans won a great battle at Saratoga, and this was a very splendid thing for them, because, when news of the battle of Saratoga reached Europe, the King of France thought that a great chance had come for him to hurt England, and he sent French soldiers to America, under the command of a general called Lafayette, to fight with Washington against the English. Battle after battle was lost until, in the year 1783, King George was obliged to sign a treaty in which he agreed that the American colonies no longer belonged to England but were an independent nation.

It is not nice for us to have to read about English soldiers being defeated, but sometimes it is better to lose than to win, and it has been quite a good thing for the world, and for the English people too, that America should be an independent country, living its own life and making its own history on the other side of the Atlantic. George III showed how wrong he was when he hired foreign soldiers to fight against the Americans, and many of the wisest people in England at the time were very glad when they read that the Americans, who were English by race, and who spoke the English language, had beaten the Germans whom King George had sent against them. Since 1783 people have gone from every country in Europe to live in America, but from whatever country they have gone, they have soon learned to speak English and to read the same books as we read and to love the same poets and the same story-tellers. This is, of course, a great tie between the English and the American people, and the friendship which has always existed was made ever so much stronger when, during the Great War, the English and the French were hard pressed by the

Germans, and America sent her soldiers to their help and a great victory was quickly won.

Soon after the war in America came to an end, a very important thing happened in France. I have mentioned the name once or twice of the French king, Louis XIV. He reigned for a very long time. He fought and won many wars and he made himself the master of nearly all Europe. Louis XIV loved what is called glory; he lived in a magnificent palace just outside Paris, and he was always surrounded by a great crowd of courtiers who flattered him and waited on him, and quarrelled as to which of them should hand him his shirt when he got up in the morning and which of them should do up his boots. All this magnificence and all the wars that Louis XIV fought cost a great deal of money. None of the courtiers and none of the great bishops paid any taxes, so all the money had to be paid by the merchants and the poor working people, and, while Louis XIV was living in splendour, the common people in France were miserably poor and wretched. They grew poorer and more wretched when Louis XIV died and his great-grandson, Louis XV, became king. There was

the same expensive splendour in the palace and the same fighting, although Louis XV lost his battles and Louis XIV generally won his. At last the French people began to think that something must be done to make their lives happier. They had grown very tired of wasteful kings and bad government, and they eagerly read books in which the writers explained how a country could be properly governed and how the people could be made content. I have not time here to tell you all about what men call the French Revolution. You will find the story of the Revolution in *The Child's Book of France*, and you can read a splendid account of how it began in Charles Dickens's novel *A Tale of Two Cities*. Here it is enough for me to tell you that the French people revolted against their king, Louis XVI, imprisoned him, his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette and their children, and, after a while, put both the King and the Queen to death, just as, years before, the English people had executed their king, Charles I. It is always wrong to kill people, but the French people had bitter cause to be angry with their kings. France became a Republic, that is, a country

in which the people themselves choose who shall be their ruler, and it took as its motto the three words "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." Most of the great lords fled from France after the Revolution. Those who remained were thrown into prison and many of them were put to death.

The other kings in Europe were, of course, very angry when they heard that the French had killed their king. Austria and Prussia declared war on the French Republic, and after a while England joined them. No king, indeed, was angrier than George III when he heard what had happened in Paris. George III hated the idea of liberty and equality, and for years he had been trying to prevent the English people from saying what they liked and from printing in books what they believed. The chief English minister, however, at this time was William Pitt, the son of the other Pitt of whom I have told you who became Earl of Chatham, and this William Pitt disliked wars as much as Robert Walpole had disliked them. However, when the French revolutionists captured the town of Antwerp, and threatened his country, Pitt felt that England must join

in the war. He gave money to Austria and Prussia to pay their soldiers, and he sent English soldiers into Belgium and to the south of France. Many battles were fought, and the French revolutionists won them all. On the sea, however, the English sailors were always successful. Great battles were won by the English ships, and I want you to remember one of these battles, the battle of St. Vincent, particularly, because among the English sailors in this fight was Horatio Nelson, the greatest of all our sailors and one of the most splendid of all English heroes.

After they had executed their king, the French found it difficult to find rulers who would make the people obey the laws and, at the same time, make France strong enough to fight against her many enemies. At last, however, a man was found who made France more powerful than she had ever been before in her history. His name was Napoleon Bonaparte. He was not really a Frenchman at all. He was the son of a poor lawyer who lived in the island of Corsica. Napoleon was one of the greatest soldiers who ever lived, and although he was poor and was not really a

Frenchman, in a little while he made himself the Emperor of the French.

In the next chapter I shall tell you how Napoleon Bonaparte affected the history of England and the story of the English people, but, before I do that, I want to tell you something of the great men who lived in England during the eighteenth century, to the end of which we have now come, and whose names we English still remember with pride. Five years after George I came from Germany to be king of England, Daniel Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe.* I expect nearly all the children who read my book have already read *Robinson Crusoe,* and I am sure that they will think that it is very wonderful that a book, written more than two hundred years ago, should still be giving English children so many happy hours. I would like you to feel that the really great man is the man who makes people happy, and if you understand this, you will feel that the man who wrote *Robinson Crusoe* was a far, far greater man than most of the kings whose names you read in history books.

A few years after Daniel Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe,* Jonathan Swift wrote *Gulliver's*

Travels, another book which some of you have read and which all of you will read one of these days. Jonathan Swift was a sad, gloomy man who hated injustice and loved honesty. Later on still in the eighteenth century, another great honest man called Samuel Johnson lived in London, busily writing books about the poets as well as a great dictionary which helped the English people to understand their own language. Samuel Johnson was not at all good-looking and he was often very poor, but he was so clever and so honest that everyone was glad to know him and to be his friend. One of Johnson's best friends was Oliver Goldsmith, who wrote a pretty story called *The Vicar of Wakefield* and a poem called *The Deserted Village*, which I am sure you will all like very much. There were two other poets who lived in these Georgian days whose names I should like you to remember. One was Gray, who wrote what is called an Elegy. If you will ask your father or your mother to read Gray's *Elegy* aloud to you, you will love the sound of the beautiful lines that Gray wrote. The other poet was Robert Burns. He was a Scotsman and a ploughman.

He had very little education and yet he wrote some of the most splendid poems in our language. It is nice to remember the wonderful things that have been done by quite simple, poor Englishmen. The great Shakespeare was the son of a butcher, John Bunyan who wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress*, was a tinker, and Robert Burns was a ploughman.

Many great English painters lived and worked in the eighteenth century. Among them were Hogarth, who made drawings illustrating the sad lives that some people led in London at this time; Morland, who painted beautiful pictures of the English countryside; Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was a friend of old Samuel Johnson; and Gainsborough and Romney, who painted many splendid portraits.

WATT DISCOVERING THE POWER OF STEAM

Marcus Stone, R.A.

CHAPTER IX

FROM NAPOLEON TO VICTORIA

Before I tell you about the wars between England and Napoleon and how the English people suffered from the constant fighting, I must go back a little in my story. I wonder if you remember that I told you that the battles fought in France by Edward III, the Black Prince and Henry V, were won, not by great lords with their armour and long swords, but by the English countrymen with their long-bows and arrows. These countrymen, or peasants as they were called, generally owned their own little farms on which they worked hard all the year round, growing their corn and grinding it themselves for bread, milking their cows, spinning the wool from their sheep, killing their pigs and brewing their own beer. They were generally happy people and they always had enough to eat and drink. They were not quite so happy after Henry VIII had

driven away the monks and had given the monastery lands to his friends. But they went on being fairly happy until about the end of the reign of Queen Anne. They did not like the way in which the Puritans stopped their simple pleasures, but apart from this, these peasants did not care very much whether the King or the Parliament won battles or whether Oliver Cromwell or Charles II was the ruler of England. They just went on looking after their little farms and minding their own business. In the eighteenth century, however, rich men who had made lots of money as merchants in London and other English cities, spent some of the money in buying large estates in the country, and most of the little farmers were driven out of their cottages and were obliged either to work for the rich merchants for very low wages or else to take their families away from the country villages into the crowded towns. To make things worse for them, the rich traders stole the common lands, the lands, that is, which belonged to all the people of the villages and on which they were able to feed their cows and their pigs. The rich traders put fences round the common

land and there was no more pasture left for the poor men's animals.

About this time, a man called Watt invented the steam engine. I expect you have heard the story how Watt was one day watching a kettle boiling and he noticed that the steam in the kettle was strong enough to move the lid. He thought to himself that if a little steam could do this, a great deal of steam could do much more, and that it might be used to run great machines. Three men called Hargreaves, Arkwright and Cartwright made machines for spinning wool and cotton. These machines were set going by steam, and great factories were built in Lancashire and Yorkshire in which men and women were employed, making cotton sheets and other cotton things and woollen cloth. These factories were built in Lancashire and Yorkshire because there is plenty of coal in those two counties and the coal was wanted to boil the water to make the steam. For many hundreds of years there had been a lot of iron smelting in Sussex and Hampshire, and the heat for smelting the iron had been obtained from great wood fires. But, in the course of time, the forests had almost

all been cut down and there was no more wood, so iron smelting had to be moved from the south of England to the north near the coal-mines. All these changes are called the Industrial Revolution. In a very few years the life of the English people was completely altered. There were no more little farms. In the south of England the people worked on the large farms owned by rich men, and they generally lived in miserable cottages and hardly had enough food. In the north of England men were working in the coal-mines and in the iron factories, and men, women and even little children were working in the cotton and woollen mills. They lived crowded together in badly built houses, and they worked very long hours. There were no schools for the children, and the country that had once been Merrie England had become a very sad England indeed. There were more rich people in England than there had ever been before, but the poor had never been quite so poor and unhappy.

This was the state of England when she began her long struggle with Napoleon Bonaparte. Like Louis XIV, Napoleon wanted to be the

master of the whole of Europe, and he knew he could never be master until he had broken England's power. In the year 1797, Napoleon took an army to Egypt, hoping to cut off England from India, but fortunately England had the great Nelson to help her, and Nelson destroyed the French fleet, while it was anchored at the mouth of the river Nile, and Napoleon was forced to hurry back to Paris, leaving most of his soldiers behind. Soon afterwards he beat the Austrians in two big battles, but, once more, Nelson won a great fight at sea, this time in the Baltic, and after that there was peace for a few months between England and France. But war soon began again, and this time Napoleon planned to bring his soldiers to England and conquer our country. He built a large camp at Boulogne and gathered together a mighty army. I think you will understand that soldiers cannot be carried across the sea unless the boats which carry them are protected by warships, and our wonderful Nelson made it impossible for Napoleon's soldiers to invade England by destroying all the French warships, in the famous battle of Trafalgar in the year 1805.

Before the battle began, Nelson, who had lost one arm and one eye in the other battles he had fought, signalled to his sailors the message : " England expects that every man this day will do his duty." Every man did do his duty and a great victory was won. Unhappily, Nelson himself was mortally wounded. Before he died, he knew that the French were beaten and that England was saved, and his last words were : " Thank God, I have done my duty." There never was a greater or a finer Englishman than Lord Nelson. We think of his courage with pride, and we are glad that we are English as he was English.

Although the English sailors beat the French on the sea, Napoleon went on winning battles on land. An English army, led by the Duke of Wellington, fought the French in Spain and Portugal, and although the French fought very stubbornly, the Duke of Wellington began to beat them, and by the year 1814 he had driven the French army across the Pyrenees, the mountains that separate Spain from France, back to their own country. Two years before this, Napoleon had taken his army into Russia

and had reached the city of Moscow, but the Russian people set the city on fire, and it was almost impossible for Napoleon to find food for his soldiers. After a little while, he was forced to march home again. It was winter time, the weather was terribly cold, Napoleon's army was almost without food and was attacked every day by the Russians, who followed the French in small bodies and killed all the poor soldiers who were too worn out and cold and hungry to keep up with their friends. When he got back to France with the soldiers who were left, Napoleon tried once more to conquer his enemies, but he was beaten in a battle at Leipzig in Germany, and after this, when he heard that his soldiers had been driven out of Spain by the Duke of Wellington, he knew that all was lost, and he surrendered to his enemies. He was sent as a prisoner to the island of Elba in the Mediterranean Sea. The brother of Louis XVI, the French king who was killed during the Revolution, was made King of France, not by the French people, who were never asked whom they would like for their king, but by the rulers of England and Prussia

and Austria. At the same time, England was given the island of Malta in the Mediterranean, which is still hers, and the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, which was the beginning of the British Dominion of South Africa, about which I shall have more to tell you before I finish my story. Napoleon did not stop in Elba very long. He soon escaped to France, and most of the French people were glad to see him because they much preferred the clever Emperor to the silly king whom foreign countries had chosen for them. For a hundred days Napoleon was once more Emperor of the French, and he was beaten at the battle of Waterloo, near the city of Brussels in Belgium, by the English led by the Duke of Wellington, and the Prussians led by a general called Blücher. Once more Napoleon had to surrender and, this time, he was taken away in an English warship to the far-away island of St. Helena, where he lived a very unhappy life until his death six years afterwards.

Everyone was very frightened of Napoleon, and English mothers used to try and make their children good by threatening that Napoleon

WELLINGTON AND BLÜCHER AT WATERLOO

Daniel Maclise, R.A.

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would come for them if they were naughty. It is true that he brought much suffering to the poor people all over Europe through his never-ending wars, but he did some good things. He gave France laws which both the poor and the rich had to obey, and he made the French peasants happy on little farms, which were really their own, and which nobody could take away from them.

I have already told you several times, that wars cost a great deal of money, and the cost of the long war against Napoleon forced the English Government to make the people pay very high taxes. When the wars were over, and soldiers were discharged from the army, they wandered about the country without work or food. There were several bad harvests, and this made things worse, and when the people gathered together to try and find out some way in which things might be made better, soldiers were sent to fire on the unarmed men and women and to compel them to go back to their homes. The people went on working long hours for bad wages and there was misery and want all through this England

of ours. It is, however, a pleasant thing for us to know that while there have always been wicked people in England as well as in every other country, most of the English people have always hated other people to be unhappy and miserable, and have always wanted everyone to be treated justly and fairly. There were many good men in England at this time who hated the misery that they saw all around them, and they made up their minds that something must be done to make things better. Before the beginning of the Napoleonic wars a clergyman called John Wesley had followed the example of St. Francis and his friars, and had gone among the poor and miserable preaching to them and teaching them how to live better lives, and when John Wesley died, his friends, who were called Wesleyans, did their best to destroy the ignorance and the unhappiness of the very poor people. They started schools, they did their best to make prisons less cruel than they were, and they helped to destroy the slave trade in the British Colonies across the seas, where black men were bought and sold like horses and were made to

work hard without being paid any wages. Other good men persuaded Parliament to pass laws forbidding little children to work in the coal-mines and the factories, and in the year 1832 an Act of Parliament was made by which the Members of the House of Commons, instead of being chosen by one or two rich men, were chosen by all the people except the very poor. Many years had to pass, however, before the very poor were allowed to choose the people who should rule them.

George III died in the year 1820. I have told you that he was always a silly man, and he went quite mad some years before his death and was not able to take any part in the government of the country. The next king was George IV, the son of George III, who was selfish and wicked, caring for nothing but his own pleasure. We should call George IV a cad in these days. The next king was William IV, another of George III's sons. He had been a sailor and was a rather silly, good-natured old gentleman. Then, in the year 1837, Queen Victoria, George III's grand-daughter, began her long reign. The poor

people of England were not very happy in this year, 1837, but thanks to the things about which I have told you, they were far happier than they had been twenty-two years before, when the wars against Napoleon at last came to an end.

Several times in this story I have had to tell you about the quarrels between England and Ireland, and I have been forced to add that the English kings were often cruel to the Irish, and that if the Irish hate the English, the hatred is not without cause. In the last years of the eighteenth century, Ireland, where the majority of the people were Roman Catholic, was governed by a Parliament, all the Members of which were Protestants. The Roman Catholics, of course, did not like this, and when the English, who had settled in America, made the Republic of the United States, the Irish were encouraged to say that their country ought also to be allowed to make its own laws and that Roman Catholics as well as Protestants ought to be Members of Parliament. A great many people in England agreed with the Irish, but the English Govern-

ment, of which at this time William Pitt was the head, would not agree. So the Irish rebelled against the English and Napoleon sent over French soldiers to help them, and there was much fierce fighting which always ended in English victories. After the victories, I am sorry to say, the English soldiers behaved very badly to the Irish whom they had beaten, and Ireland was a very wretched country indeed. At last, in 1801, William Pitt decided that England and Ireland should have the same Parliament and that there should no longer be a separate Parliament in Dublin. The Irish never agreed to give up their own Parliament, and this Act of Union, as it was called, added to the bad feeling between the two countries.

In England, as well as in Ireland, no Roman Catholic was allowed to be a Member of Parliament or to be the mayor of any town, or to hold any position of authority in the country. It will seem to you very unfair to punish good men and women because of their religion. But in England a hundred and fifty years ago many of the Protestants hated the idea that Roman

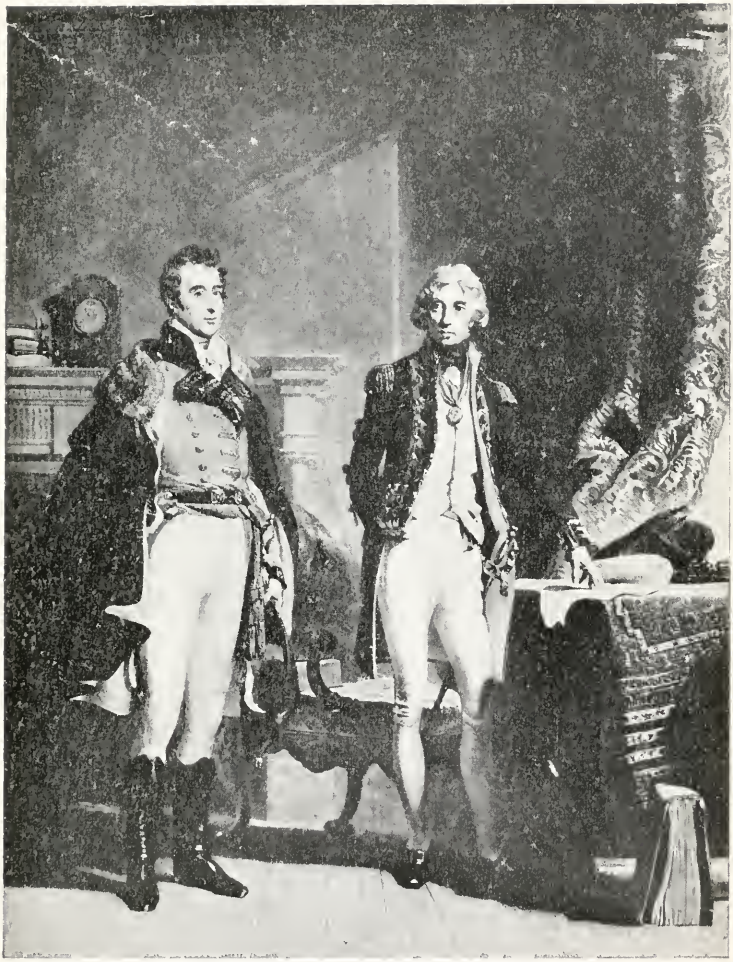
Catholics should have equal rights, and when it was once suggested that Roman Catholic priests should no longer be called traitors to England, just because they were priests, there were riots in the city of London and many houses and Roman Catholic churches were set on fire. The rioters were led by a poor madman called Lord George Gordon, and you can read all about him in an exciting novel by Charles Dickens called *Barnaby Rudge.*

At last, nearly fifty years after the Gordon riots, men grew fairer and more sensible, and a law was made which allowed Roman Catholics to belong to the English Parliament. This law was opposed by King George IV and by the great Duke of Wellington who defeated Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo. But the people of England had made up their minds that Englishmen who were Roman Catholics should be treated fairly, and by this time the people of England had grown stronger than kings and great generals.

While the wars with Napoleon were going on, while England and Ireland were quarrelling, while good men were struggling hard to make

the lives of the very poor people less miserable and to secure fair play for the Roman Catholics, splendid books were written in our country by Sir Walter Scott, William Wordsworth, Shelley, Lord Byron, Keats, Charles Lamb and many others. At no time, indeed, were there so many clever writers in England as in this first quarter of last century. Sir Walter Scott wrote many stories of brave men and good and beautiful women which I hope you will read very soon. Wordsworth wrote beautiful poems about the simple life of the countryside. Byron and Shelley and Keats were three of the greatest poets who ever lived. I do not suppose you will read their poetry until you are rather older, and then you will be thrilled by its beauty, but I want you to remember the names of these men, because it is great poets far more than great soldiers who make a country wonderful and properly proud. Charles Lamb, the other writer whom I have mentioned, was a kind, sweet-natured man who looked round the world and saw all sorts of simple, amusing things about which he wrote in a simple, amusing way. When presently

you read the books that Charles Lamb wrote, I should not be surprised if you felt that he was of more importance to you and to the other English people who are living now, than William Pitt or even the Duke of Wellington.



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CHAPTER X

THE DAYS OF QUEEN VICTORIA

It is very interesting for us to remember that the two most prosperous and wonderful times in our history were when England was ruled by two great queens, first by Queen Elizabeth and afterwards by Queen Victoria. Victoria was just eighteen when she became queen. She was fast asleep in her bed in Kensington Palace when, early one morning, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Melbourne came to tell her that her uncle, William IV, had died and that she was now the ruler of England. She hastily put a dressing-gown over her nightdress and received these two great men. It made her very sad to hear of her uncle's death, but young as she was, she did not feel at all afraid of the great position to which she was called. Victoria was a very little woman, but she was always brave and determined. She always tried to do her duty, and she always

judged everything for herself all through the sixty-three years that she was Queen of England. The people of England were glad to have a young queen to rule over them. They had grown very tired of poor mad George III and his two silly sons, and they thought that this pretty young queen of theirs would bring luck to the whole country. Three years after she had become queen, Victoria married a German prince called Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. This Prince Albert was a good man and, like his wife, he was always anxious to do the best for England. Victoria loved him very dearly, and she generally, though not always, did what he advised her to do. Unfortunately, Prince Albert never learned quite to understand the English people, and sometimes, as I shall have to tell you, he persuaded the Queen to do things which were good for Germany but which were not at all good for England or for the rest of Europe. England began to grow rich when Queen Victoria came to the throne and, all through her reign, the country grew richer and more prosperous, far richer than it had ever been before and far richer than it is now. I daresay

you will remember that I told you how Watt invented the steam engine and how his engines were fitted to machines for weaving cotton and wool. A few years before the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, a man, called George Stevenson, found out how a steam engine could be made to draw carriages and trucks, and the first railway line in England was built in 1825 between the towns of Stockton and Darlington. Until Stevenson had made his first locomotive engine, as it was called, when men wanted to travel they were obliged to go in coaches or carriages drawn by horses, just, indeed, as the Romans had travelled hundreds of years before. The roads had become very much better, but the means of travelling were just the same and it took a man hours and days to go on what would seem to us quite a short journey. It was many years before railways were built all over England and before everybody travelled in railway trains. At first the English people thought that the trains were very dangerous. This will seem rather funny to you, but you must remember that many people think that aeroplanes are dangerous nowadays, and yet it is quite likely that in fifty years' time everybody

will travel in aeroplanes just as we travel in trains to-day.

Soon after the railways had been built, another clever man, called Professor Wheatstone, invented the electric telegraph by which we are able to send messages many hundreds of miles in a few seconds. It was not until many years later that the telephone was first invented, but in the early days of Queen Victoria, trains enabled men to travel much more quickly from one place to another than they had been able to do before, and they could send letters and messages in a few hours, or even in a few minutes, when it had taken their fathers and grandfathers days and sometimes weeks. The different parts of the country and the different parts of the world were brought much nearer to each other.

But, though there was prosperity in England, a number of the English people remained unhappy and discontented. I have told you that, in the year 1832, a law was passed which gave the middle classes in this country—the merchants and the shop-keepers

and the doctors and the lawyers—the right to say who should be Members of the House of Commons; that is, who the men should be who made the country's laws. But the poorer people, the labourers and the carpenters and the people who worked in factories and coal-mines, still had nothing to do with the making of the laws which they had to obey. Some of these people thought that this was very unfair (I hope you will agree with them), and in the year 1848, some of the poor people collected together and demanded that they should have the same rights as the other classes of Englishmen. These people called themselves Chartists. The Government refused to give them what they asked, and the result was that there were riots in some parts of England and much discontent. And this discontent was made worse by the fact that for two or three years there had been very bad harvests in England and in Ireland. Food was very dear, and the poor people were often unable to buy enough to eat.

Things were worse in Ireland than they were in England. The Irish people largely live on

potatoes, and, when the potato crop failed, thousands of the Irish people died of hunger and thousands more left Ireland to make their homes in the United States. All this, of course, made the Irish people more angry than ever. Perhaps it was silly of them, but they thought that it was England's fault that they were suffering so much and that, if Ireland were allowed to govern herself, these dreadful calamities would not happen. So once more the Irish revolted against their English rulers, and once more the revolt was subdued and the Irish people punished.

But however badly they were punished, the Irish people went on demanding that they should own the farms on which they worked, and that they should have a Parliament of their own to govern the country. They were not strong enough to fight against England, but they were always plotting and they were always discontented, and it often happened that some of the more discontented Irish people would kill the friends of the English who lived in Ireland, and sometimes the English rulers themselves. At last, it seemed to a great

Englishman called Gladstone that it might be a good thing to give the Irish the Parliament that they wanted, to let them manage their own affairs, and then to see if the Irish and the English would be friends. Unfortunately, it was not until after Gladstone's death that the English people did what he had advised them to do.

I have told you how our country began to be covered with factories, and how thousands of people, who used to work on the land, ploughing and sowing and reaping, were obliged to work in the factories and live in city slums. One result was that England soon began to produce less corn than was needed to supply all the people with bread, and corn had to be brought in ships to England from foreign countries. Before, however, it was landed in England, a certain sum of money called an " import duty " had to be paid to the Government. I am sure you will understand that this made the corn and the bread dearer, and the poor people said that the Government ought to do away with this " import duty " so that they might be able to buy cheap bread. The

English farmers said that it would be quite wrong not to have "import duties" on corn, because if the foreign corn was cheap, the English farmers would have to sell their corn cheaply too, or else no one would buy it. On the other hand, the men who owned the great factories were on the side of the poor people, partly because they were kind-hearted and really wanted the people to have cheap food, and partly, I am afraid, because they thought that, if food continued to be dear, they would have to pay their workers higher wages. For some time there was a quarrel between the two sides and then, at last, a great man, called Sir Robert Peel, persuaded Parliament to take off the tax on foreign corn. Since then, there have been no taxes in England on food, and until the Great War, food was cheaper in England than in any other country.

After Napoleon had been beaten at Waterloo in 1815 there were no more wars in Europe for nearly forty years. Then England found herself fighting with France and Turkey against the Russians in a small part of South Russia called the Crimea. I want you to understand

the reason why the English fought in the Crimean War, because the same reason has caused the English to fight in many other wars. The rulers of England have never liked any of the countries on the continent of Europe to be strong enough to be the masters of the other countries. They have always thought it very dangerous for one country to be too powerful, because they have feared that, if any one country managed to be master of Europe, it would soon want to be master of England too. So, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, England fought Spain because she had grown strong and dangerous, and England fought France in the days of Louis XIV and Napoleon because at these times France seemed dangerous. After Queen Victoria had reigned in England for a few years, England began to be afraid of Russia. The Russians wanted to drive the Turks out of Constantinople and make that city Christian once again, but the English rulers thought that if Russia were allowed to have Constantinople, she would push her way to Egypt and cut the road between England and India. Nations often make excuses for

wars which are not the real reasons at all. There were the usual excuses for the Crimean War, but the real reason was, as I have told you, that Russia should not have Constantinople. The English soldiers won many victories in the Crimean War, particularly at Balaclava, where the English horse-soldiers heroically charged the Russian guns (you can read about this in Lord Tennyson's fine poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade"), but the English Government, safe at home in London, made many terrible blunders, and the poor soldiers in the Crimea were left without proper food or clothing, and there were no decent hospitals to which they could be carried when they were wounded. Fortunately, a splendid Englishwoman, called Florence Nightingale, went out to the Crimea with a number of other brave Englishwomen, some of them Roman Catholic nuns, and they washed out the hospital wards, and nursed the wounded soldiers, and compelled the doctors to look after them, and so saved many hundreds of lives. Very little good came to England from the Crimean War, and it is not worth while remembering the names of the generals who led

the English army. But Florence Nightingale is one of the people that we ought to remember, for not only did she do so much good to the poor soldiers in the Crimea, but when she came home again, she saw that our English hospitals were made comfortable places, clean and wholesome, with kind, clever nurses to look after the patients. Florence Nightingale was a happiness-maker, and, as I have said before, it is the happiness-makers who are the important people everywhere.

Soon after the Crimean War came to an end, the native Indian soldiers in India joined with some of the Indian princes and rebelled against their English rulers. Of course, there were only a few English people in India compared with the thousands and thousands of natives, and for a time it looked as if all the English in India might be killed. At a place called Cawnpore, five hundred English women and children were put on board boats, which were then fired upon and sunk and all the people drowned, and at other places many English men, women and children were shot. But the English soldiers in India fought very bravely, and when more soldiers arrived from

England, the Mutiny was brought to an end. A great man called Canning was sent out to India, and although the leaders of the Mutiny were properly punished, Canning was very merciful to the rest of the Indians who had fought against the English, and he proved that mercy is not only right, but that it is far wiser than cruelty. In a very little while, the Indian people were convinced that the English people were really their friends, and for fifty years there was peace throughout the country. The English people began to think of India as a distant part of the British Empire whose people had the same interests as their own, and a few years afterwards, Lord Beaconsfield, one of the great men who helped Queen Victoria to rule England, had the Queen acclaimed as " Empress of India " as well as Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.

During the reign of Queen Victoria, the different countries in various parts of the world, where the English had settled, were drawn closer together and made into what we call the British Empire. The English people have always been very restless and have always been ready to go away from their homes, seeking

change and adventure. In this, the English are very different to the French, who much prefer to stay at home, and who, if they do go away to foreign countries, are never quite happy till they get home once more. As you will remember, the English sailors, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, sailed over to America and many of them stayed there, and in the years that followed the English people went on crossing the Atlantic, some settling in the United States and becoming Americans, and others settling in Canada and remaining Englishmen. In the year 1770, an English sailor called Captain Cook landed on the shores of Australia and christened the part of the country where he landed New South Wales. Other Englishmen landed afterwards at other parts of Australia, which they christened Victoria and South Australia and Queensland and Western Australia, and, because Englishmen had landed in these places, they became English colonies and were ruled by the English Queen. The people who lived in Australia, before the English went there, were rather stupid savages, unable to rule themselves and easily forced to accept the rule of the white man. For some

time, the English Government "transported" people, who had broken the laws and whom we now keep in prison, to Australia, where they had to work as slaves. But in later times thousands of free Englishmen sailed away to Australia, to the little island of Tasmania which is just south of Australia, and to the island of New Zealand which became a British colony in the year 1839, and settled in these islands, breeding sheep, sowing the fields and building towns, just as they had done in Canada. They had their own Governments and looked after their own affairs, but they were proud still to be English and the Queen of England was their queen.

I have told you that after the defeat of Napoleon, the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa also became an English colony, and, thirty years afterwards, the English took possession of the country called Natal, which is near the Cape of Good Hope. When the English first settled in Canada and in Australia and in New Zealand, the only people with whom they had to deal were savages who were easily subdued. But things were much more difficult in South Africa because, years before the

English went there, hundreds of Dutch farmers had gone there from Holland and made new homes for themselves, and these Dutch farmers did not want to be ruled by the English Queen and the English Parliament. Sometimes the Dutch and the English quarrelled, sometimes there was peace between them, and sometimes they joined together to fight against the Zulus and other African negro tribes, who owned the land long before the Dutch and the English, and who disliked all white men. The English had their two countries, the Cape of Good Hope and Natal, and the Dutch, who are called Boers, had their two countries, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. But in the later years of the nineteenth century, gold was found in the Transvaal, and men hurried from all parts of the world to dig for the gold and make themselves rich. The Boers were farmers. They were not greedy people and they did not want gold, and they began to hate the gold-seekers. Soon bitter quarrels arose, and these quarrels ended in a war between the Boers and the English. The English said that South Africa must be one country and that it must be part of the British Empire. The Boers said

that they meant to have a country of their own. The Boers are a very brave people and, although there were not many of them, it was three years before they were conquered, and the English had to send thousands of soldiers from England with two great generals, Lord Kitchener and Lord Roberts, before victory could be won. Queen Victoria was quite an old woman when the Boer War was fought and it made her last days very sad. She died, indeed, before the war came to an end. When at last the Boers were conquered the English said to them: "We do not want to make you slaves and we do not want to force you to do what you are told by the English Parliament. We want you to live in peace with the English in South Africa and with them to make your own laws and govern your own land. All that we want is that South Africa shall be a free part of the British Empire, just like Australia and Canada and New Zealand." I hope you will think this was a fine thing for England to have said, and I am sure that you will be glad to know that most of the Boers agreed to do what England asked. At the present time, a Boer, called General Smuts, who fought

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against the English twenty years ago, is the head of the South African Government and a true and faithful friend of England, and when the Great War began, Boer soldiers came from South Africa to fight on the side of the English. So you will see England has gained very much from being just and fair and merciful.

England has always been very interested in Egypt, and perhaps you remember that, when Napoleon took a French army to Egypt, the English Government immediately sent Lord Nelson and the English warships after him, and that Nelson destroyed the French fleet at the battle of the Nile. Egypt is important to England because it is on the road to India. About fifty years ago, a clever French engineer dug right through the Isthmus of Suez and made a canal, which, if you look at the map, you will see joins the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea. After this canal was made, when a ship was sailing from England to India, instead of going all round Africa, it could go through the Suez Canal and save half the journey. Although a French engineer made the canal, the English

Government found some of the money to pay. Now if you look at the map again, you will see that the Suez Canal is very near Egypt, and that if the Egyptians wanted to hurt England, they might destroy the canal and cut the shortest road to India. The English Government, therefore, has always wanted Egypt to be peaceful and friendly. About forty years ago the Egyptians began to quarrel with each other, and English soldiers were sent to Egypt to make the people obey their rulers. It is very easy to send soldiers into a country, and it is often very difficult to take them away again. English soldiers have remained in Egypt, and the English Government has constantly interfered with the government of Egypt. There is no doubt whatever that this has been very good for the poor Egyptians, and they have been much happier since Englishmen have been in their country to see that they were treated justly. But men always like to govern their countries themselves, and the English people have now agreed that Egypt shall have a government of its own, and perhaps the English soldiers in Egypt will soon be able to come home.

Because England sent soldiers to Egypt, it became England's duty to protect the country against the savage blacks who live in the south of Egypt and who have always been among the bravest and fiercest fighters on the earth. Some years ago, these black fighting men were led by a chief who was half king and half priest and whom the people called the Mahdi. The English sent out a brave and good man called General Gordon to hold the country against the Mahdi and to protect Egypt. General Gordon was killed by the Mahdi's followers in the town of Khartoum, and many of the English people were very angry with the English Government and with the chief minister, William Gladstone, because they said that Gladstone ought to have sent a strong English army to Gordon's help. It was decided that, though Gordon was dead, the Mahdi and his friends must be defeated and that Khartoum must be taken away from them. Another English general, called Kitchener, was chosen for this task. Kitchener was a very patient man. He never struck until he was ready. It took him years to make his preparations, and then he attacked the Mahdi's people, defeated

them at the battle of Omdurman and recaptured Khartoum.

You will think from what I have told you that the English people were always fighting in the time of Queen Victoria. But although there were many wars while the great queen reigned, and many men were killed, they were only little wars, in which there were only a few thousand soldiers on each side, and they were really nothing compared to the Great War, which began fourteen years after Queen Victoria died.

You will remember that the Queen's husband was a German, and the Queen herself belonged to a family that had come from Germany. Her eldest daughter married the eldest son of the King of Prussia, and it was natural that the Queen should like Germany and sympathise with the Germans. While this was true, you must not suppose that Queen Victoria ever forgot that she was Queen of England or that she ever ceased to do her very best for the English people. During most of the time that she was queen, she was very friendly with the French and she paid several visits to Paris. However, once, at least, her liking for Germany

led to a dreadful mistake. The King of Prussia wanted to seize two provinces next to his country, which belonged to the King of Denmark. These provinces are called Schleswig and Holstein. The Danes fought hard to resist the Prussians, but the Prussians were much stronger, and in order to make certain of winning, the King of Prussia had persuaded the Austrians to fight on his side. Many Englishmen wanted British ships to be sent into the Baltic Sea to fight for Denmark, but Queen Victoria would not let this be done, and the Danes were defeated and Schleswig and Holstein became Prussian. Now, in these provinces there is a place called Kiel, and the Germans made a canal at Kiel, which enabled them to sail their warships quickly from one place to the other and helped them to make a navy, which, in course of time, became almost as strong as the British navy. Some years afterwards, England gave Prussia the island of Heligoland, off the mouth of the river Elbe, which had belonged to England for many, many years. If Prussia, which in the year 1871, after the successful war against France, became the master of all Germany, had not

been permitted to seize Schleswig and Holstein, and if Heligoland had not been given to her, there would probably never have been a German fleet of great warships and Germany might never have been strong enough to begin the Great War. Right up to Queen Victoria's death the English Government was very friendly with the German Government, and the Englishmen who helped Queen Victoria to rule the British Empire never understood that German rulers were thinking all the time of a war that should make them the masters of all Europe.

Not only did the rich people grow richer in Victorian times, but the poor people became much happier and more prosperous than they were at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Many laws were passed to prevent children being overworked in factories, and to forbid women and children from working in coal-mines and from doing any other work that was too much for their strength. Another law was passed that compelled fathers and mothers to send their children to school, and this was followed by arrangements that made it possible for the clever children of the working people to

go to the best schools and afterwards to Oxford and Cambridge. Later on a law was passed which made education free for everyone. Better houses were built for the people, and great care was taken that the drains should be good in all English cities. In this way the English people were saved from many diseases, which had killed thousands of people in earlier times. During Queen Victoria's reign, it became the rule in England for everybody to have a Saturday afternoon holiday, and so the people had time for play as well as for work. The working people formed themselves into Trade Unions, which are something like the Trade Guilds about which I have told you. With the help of their Trade Unions, the workers persuaded their masters to pay them higher wages and to be content with shorter hours of work. Food and clothes were cheap and, although there were many hardships in Victorian England and many people were discontented, it was really a happy time.

Many great men (you might remember the names of Darwin and Huxley) found out lots of things about the nature of man and about the facts of life. Other great men learned how

to conquer disease and to make pain less. Ships became bigger and faster, the telephone was invented and, before Queen Victoria died, men began to drive about the city streets and country roads in motor-cars. Newspapers and magazines and books became much cheaper, and almost everybody in England had learned to read.

Perhaps the greatest of the Victorian poets was Lord Tennyson, and I think that, young as you are, you would like Lord Tennyson's poems very much if you were to read them. Other great poets of the time, whose names you should remember, were Robert Browning, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and his sister Christina Rossetti, and Algernon Swinburne. Many great writers who were not poets also lived in Queen Victoria's days—Macaulay, who wrote a famous History of England and who also wrote some fine poems called *The Lays of Ancient Rome* (I am sure you would love the poem in which Macaulay tells us "How Horatius kept the Bridge in the Brave Days of Old"); Thomas Carlyle, a rather disagreeable old Scotsman, who hated meanness and injustice with all his heart; and the men

and women who wrote stories—George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, Thackeray and Dickens. Of all these writers, Charles Dickens was the greatest and most wonderful. He began his life as a poor little boy, neglected and alone, earning his living by working hard in a blacking factory in London, and though he became a rich man, and all the world read his books, he never forgot the people who were kind to him when he was a child, and he always loved the poor, and he always loved England and London. Shakespeare and Dickens are the two greatest Englishmen that ever lived, because no other men that have lived in England have given the world so much happiness. You will often laugh when you read Dickens's novels, for, like most Englishmen, he was very fond of making jokes; and you will often cry, too, because it is sad to read about the troubles of the poor and unhappy. But you will feel all the time that Dickens loved the people about whom he wrote, and, when you have read his books, you will love him too, because he had such a great heart and because he tells such fine stories.

In the year 1887, Queen Victoria had ruled

England for fifty years. This was called her Jubilee year, and she went with all the great people in England and with great men, who had come from every country in the world, to Westminster Abbey to offer thanks to God for her long life and for the happiness of her country. Ten years afterwards, in 1897, the Queen kept what was called her Diamond Jubilee. This time she went to St. Paul's Cathedral to thank God, and the great men of the nations went with her. The Queen died in 1901, and all the people of England were very sad when her body was carried away from London to be buried next her husband at Windsor. I do not think that the English people have often loved their kings and queens. In the far-away Middle Ages, when there were no newspapers and no trains, they knew very little about them. The English were proud of Queen Elizabeth, but I do not suppose they really loved her much. It must have been hard for anyone to love the Stuarts or grim William III, or fat Queen Anne or any of the Georges. But the English people knew that Queen Victoria had never been selfish and that she had always tried to make the people

happier and more content. They knew that she had cared for her husband and had been a good mother, and that she loved home and simple things like most of the English people. So it happened that this little old lady was loved by a great nation as no king or queen before her had ever been loved.

In Queen Victoria's time England had become what is called a democratic country. That is to say, nearly all the people in England helped to choose the men who ruled the country, and also the men who ruled the towns and the country parishes. All through the nineteenth century, Englishmen were nearly always on the side of other peoples who wanted to be free and to make their own laws. When the Greeks fought against the Turks, who had been their masters, many Englishmen went out to Greece to fight with them. Among these Englishmen was the great poet, Lord Byron, who died during the war. Later on, when the Italians rebelled against the Austrians, who had been their masters, all England wanted the Italians to win, and when their leader, Garibaldi, came to England, he was warmly welcomed by the people. I tell

you all this because, though many wrong and hard things have always existed in our country, the English have always loved freedom as much as any other people on the earth, and more than most peoples.

CHAPTER XI

UNTIL 1922

When Edward VII, the son of Queen Victoria, became King of England, he was already a middle-aged man. For years he had known all the chief people in the world and understood all the troubles and difficulties that often cause nations to quarrel and fight. King Edward loved peace and he made up his mind that he would always do his best to prevent quarrels, so that, when he died, people should remember him as "Edward the Peacemaker." Neighbours are always more inclined to quarrel than people who live a long way from each other, because, of course, it is so easy to know all the faults of the people who live next door and to be annoyed by them. France is the next-door neighbour to England and that is, I expect, why the French and the English have so often disagreed. Yet the French and the English are cousins. They both learned

all sorts of important things from the Romans and they are both descended from the same ancient races. They are both brave people and they both have the same love of freedom. King Edward thought, and I believe you will think the same thing, that the French and the English ought to be friends. There was very nearly a bad quarrel between France and England just before King Edward came to the throne. Some English soldiers were sailing up the river Nile, in the country south of Egypt, where the English fought the Mahdi and his followers, and when they came to a certain village of mud huts, called Fashoda, they found that it was already in the hands of a few French soldiers, commanded by an officer called Captain Marchand, and that there was a French flag flying over the house of the village chief. For a time, it seemed that the French and English would fight for the possession of this village, which neither of them really wanted. But, fortunately, the English soldiers were led by Lord Kitchener, and he had a little chat with Captain Marchand and the dispute was afterwards peacefully arranged. If there had been any fighting at Fashoda, it

is very likely that there would have been another great war in Europe between the French and the English, for wars are often begun about things that really do not matter at all. When people in France and in England heard about Fashoda, they saw how dangerous it was to have these little quarrels. King Edward went over to Paris and had long talks with the men who were ruling France, and the result of these talks was a friendly arrangement which was called the " Entente Cordiale," and in the hour of danger this Entente became an alliance between the English and the French peoples.

The war against the Boers in South Africa came to an end a little while after the beginning of King Edward's reign. Men had journeyed from Canada and Australia and New Zealand to South Africa to help the English to defeat the Boers, and after the war was over, some people said that something ought to be done to bind more closely together the different free countries that make up the British Empire. A great statesman, called Joseph Chamberlain, suggested that the Dominions across the seas should allow all goods made in England to be brought into their countries without paying

any taxation at the Custom Houses, that the English should give the same free entry to things coming from the British Dominions over the seas, but that both England and the Dominions should tax everything coming from foreign countries. Most of the people, however, in England believed in Free Trade, which means that there should hardly be any Custom taxes at all, so that the poor people could buy food and clothes and other things that they needed as cheaply as possible. While, however, the English people would not do what Joseph Chamberlain asked them to do, they thought it would be a good thing to draw more closely together the different parts of the British Empire, and during the past twenty years, the chief men from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have often come to London to talk things over with the chief men in England and to decide what is best to be done for the welfare of the English people all over the world. I expect you may have forgotten that I told you, in the last chapter, that, when the English defeated the Boers in South Africa, they made them citizens of the British Empire and gave them the same

rights as the Canadians, the Australians and the New Zealanders. This is really a most important thing for you to remember, one of the most splendid things in the history of England.

You know that boys and girls have different sorts of moods. Sometimes they are quarrelsome and disagreeable and grumpy, and sometimes they are kind and amiable and unselfish. It is exactly the same thing with nations. At the end of the nineteenth century, the English nation was so rich and prosperous that it had grown to be what boys call "cocky," and the English people half believed that there was no one else like them in the world and that other people ought to do what the English told them to do. You will find this English cockiness in the fine poems written by a poet called Rudyard Kipling. When the Boer War came and the English found that it took them years to conquer this brave little race, they grew more modest and, while they still believed that England was a fine country and that the English were a fine people, as they certainly are, they thought that the best way to prove England's greatness was to be just and fair

to other nations and to do everything possible to make the poor and weak in England happy and content. So the conquered Boers were given their freedom; and an Act of Parliament was passed to make the rich people pay most of the taxes, while the poor people paid very little, and other Acts of Parliament were passed forbidding masters to make their workmen work for more than eight hours a day, and giving people who work in shops plenty of leisure time for reading and other pleasures. The English people, too, resolved that they would no longer oppose the wish of the Irish people to look after their own affairs and that the Irish should have a Parliament of their own in Dublin. I ought to have told you that, some years before this, a law had been passed which gave the Irish peasants the power to buy their own little farms. This was a splendid thing and for a while it made the Irish content. But it did not prevent them from also wanting to govern themselves. You may have guessed from my story that all nations everywhere have this same desire.

The English people also, at this time, took away most of the power from the House of

Lords, to which men belong because their fathers belonged to it before them, and gave more power to the House of Commons, the Members of which are chosen by the people.

King Edward died in 1910 and was followed by our present king, George V. Between the years 1906 and 1914, the English Parliament was busy doing its best to make life better for the poorer people. Some of the laws that were passed were not very wise and have not been very successful, but men often try to do good things and fail and we can still be glad that they have tried.

I expect you know that the Great War began in August 1914, and that, for four years, the peoples of Europe had no time for anything else but fighting and making guns and shells and warships and aeroplanes. In order to help you to understand the beginning of the Great War, I must take you back to the year 1870. In that year, an army made up of soldiers from all the different countries into which Germany was then divided, marched into France, defeated the French army in several dreadful battles, and finally captured the city of Paris. The German kings and

princes then met together in the palace which Louis XIV of France had built at Versailles, a few miles outside Paris, and agreed that all the German countries should join together into the German Empire and that the King of Prussia should be German Emperor. This first German Emperor or Kaiser (which is the German word for Emperor) was the grandfather of the Kaiser who was ruling Germany when the Great War began. Before the Germans made peace with France in 1871, they made the French pay them a large sum of money and they took away from them the two provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.

The French are a very industrious people and they love their country very much. So after the defeat of 1870, they worked harder than they had ever worked before, and they not only soon paid off the money that Germany demanded, but they made their country richer than it was before the war. This made Germany very angry, for she really wanted France to be weak and helpless in order that she might be mistress of Europe. During the forty-three years between 1871 and 1914, the Germans trained an army larger and better armed than

any army that the world had ever seen. They also built a navy, as I have told you, almost equal to the British navy. They made alliances with Austria and Italy and Turkey, and those countries promised to fight on Germany's side if there was another war. The Germans also built great factories in which all sorts of things were made very cheaply, and they sent clever men all over the world to sell German goods and to make Germany rich. At the same time, the masters and mistresses in the schools and the professors in the universities told their pupils that the Germans were the greatest people on earth, and that, sooner or later, all other peoples would be forced to obey Germany's orders. I do not think that even half the people of Germany believed this. In Germany, as in every other country, most of the people were quite content to do their own work, look after their own business and be happy with their wives and families. But it is unhappily true that the leaders of the German army and navy, and most of the men who made the laws and ruled the country, really did want to make Germany master of Europe, just as Louis XIV and Napoleon wanted to make France the

master of Europe, and that for years these Germans were preparing for a great war, in order that the other nations might be beaten and broken.

France always knew that Germany might fight against her again, and when Germany made her alliance with Austria and Italy, France made an alliance with the Emperor of Russia in order to have friends on her side. It was a curious thing that France, where the people choose their own rulers and make their own laws, should have made friends with Russia, a country at that time ruled by one man, just as France was ruled before the French Revolution. But the fear of war drives nations to very queer actions. Before the Great War began, Europe was divided into two sides—France and Russia on one side, and Germany, Austria, Italy and Turkey on the other side. England was the friend of France, but no one was quite sure if England would fight for France if war began, or if she would keep out of the war altogether. I think that if England had said right out that she *would* fight if the German army attacked the French, Germany might have been frightened and there

would have been no Great War at all. I want you to remember this—a number of important men in Germany wanted war, a few greedy, wicked people in Russia wanted war, a very few people in Austria wanted war, but no one in France or England or Italy wanted war, and very few people really believed that the European peoples would be so foolish as to begin a great war.

Men have always found it easy to find excuses for wicked deeds, and I need not worry to tell you the excuses that the Germans made for first declaring war against Russia and then for sending a great army into Belgium in order to attack Northern France. Belgium had nothing to do with the quarrel, but the easiest road for the German army to travel was through Belgium, and the Germans, therefore, marched through Belgian towns and villages, burning and killing as they went. When people once begin war they soon cease to care what they do or who suffers so long as they win. In 1914, the English army was quite small compared with the armies of France and Germany, and the German Kaiser had called it a "contemptible little army." But these "Old Contempt-

ibles," as we English proudly call them, were hurried over to France under the command of Sir John French, now the Earl of Ypres. The English soldiers were "first-class fighting men," and they helped the French to resist the Germans in the long retreat from Mons towards Paris, and to defeat the Germans in the battle of the Marne, which brought the first chapter of the Great War to an end. Many of the "Old Contemptibles" were killed, but England will always remember their name with grateful pride.

I shall not attempt here to tell you the full story of the Great War. That would take me far too long. I shall be content to remind you of a few of the more important facts. After the battle of the Marne, the Germans dug themselves into trenches right across Northern France, and the English and French dug trenches opposite the Germans, and there the two armies stayed for nearly four years, constantly firing shells at each other, day after day. Every few weeks either the Germans tried to break through the French and English trenches or the English and the French tried to break through the German trenches. Great battles were fought,

and many fine, brave young men were killed and wounded, but, during all these long four years, no real advantage was gained by either side. On the sea, the British navy defeated the Germans at the battle of Jutland, and there were other naval battles, most of which the British won. The Germans sent out submarines that sank passenger ships and often drowned scores of women and children as well as many men, and both sides sent aeroplanes and airships over the fighting lines to drop bombs on peaceful towns and villages. I daresay some of you were in London when the German aeroplanes attacked our city. The aeroplane is one of the things that has been perfected since the death of Queen Victoria, and it is sad to think that it was first generally used to kill men and women and children.

In the last year of the war, 1918, the people of the United States, most of whom had wanted France and England to win since the beginning, joined in the fight against Germany. Mr. Wilson, the President of the United States, had told Germany that her submarines must leave off sinking passenger ships, and when the Germans refused, thousands of American

soldiers were brought in English ships across the Atlantic to fight in France. I should tell you that, in the early days of the war, almost every English man who was strong enough had joined the army, and shiploads of soldiers had come from every part of the British Empire to help England, the mother country.

The Germans are a very obedient people. Even though most of them wished there had never been a war, they obeyed orders, fought bravely and died without complaint, until, at last, they grew weary of fighting and were disheartened by the fact that there was very little food in the German towns and that their wives and families were suffering badly from hunger. Often and often, they had thought that they were going to win. In 1917, the Russians had rebelled against their Emperor, whom they killed with his whole family, and had set up a new government which at once made peace with Germany. Having no longer to fight the Russians on the east, the Germans thought it would be easier to defeat the French and English on the west, but struggle as they might, they could never break through. The French people declared : " They

shall never pass." The English soldiers, with their unconquerable humour, backed up the French, and the Germans never did pass. I must not forget to tell you that the Italians, who, the Germans thought, would fight on their side, refused to help in what they said was a bad cause, and were soon fighting on the side of the French and the English.

In the spring of 1918, the Germans made one last attempt to break through our line, and they nearly succeeded. Indeed they did break through at a place called St. Quentin and almost got to the town of Amiens. But under the leadership of Marshal Foch, the British, the French and the Americans (who had now got to the fighting line) hit back hard just when the Germans thought they had really won the war. This last blow was too much for the German soldiers. They had no heart for any more fighting and they hurried out of France back to their own country. The Kaiser escaped to Holland, where he still is, and the German people said that Germany should not be an Empire any more, but that it should be a republic like France and the United States. The first business, of course, of the new rulers of

Germany was to make peace. The Great War came to an end on November 11, 1918. I cannot tell you how many towns were burned, how many brave men were killed and maimed, how many children were made orphans, how many tears were shed. The English people did not want the war, but they were obliged to fight to save England and the rest of Europe from becoming the slaves of Germany. It is quite likely that if the rulers of England and the other countries had been wiser, there would have been no war, and we must pray that when you have grown to be men and women, the world will be too wise ever to waste another four years in killing and destruction. There is just one more thing that I want you to remember about the Great War. It was not won by the cleverness of great generals, but by the bravery of common Frenchmen, common Englishmen and common Americans, men from shops and offices and factories, who left their work and their families at home and put on uniforms and learned to shoot, because they thought it was their duty and because they wanted their countries and the whole world to be happy and free.

During the war, women learned to do many things that men generally do in peace times, and they did this men's work so well that the men of England thought it was only fair that English women should have the same rights and privileges as the men had. So in 1918 a law was passed which allowed women to vote for Members of Parliament, and even to be Members of Parliament themselves, and to-day there are two women Members of the House of Commons. I should like you to know how the House of Commons has gradually become more and more the place where the whole English people make their own laws. Years ago, the Members of the House of Commons were chosen by a few rich men. Then, in 1832, the middle-class people were given the right to choose the Members. Then, in 1867, the better off working-men were given the same right, and in 1884 nearly all men could say whom they wished to speak for them in Parliament, and now all men in England and all the women over thirty years of age may say who they think ought to go to the House of Commons at Westminster to settle the taxes and make the laws. In the old days, the Members of the

House of Commons were all rich men. Now many workmen are also Members of the House of Commons, and I am sure you will think that this is right and fair, because there are many more workpeople in the country than there are rich men.

In the year 1919, the rulers of France and England and the United States were busy in Paris settling the Treaty which had to come after the war. It was decided that Germany should give back the provinces that she had won from France in 1870, that she should give her warships to the Allies, and that she should pay a large sum of money for the destruction caused by her soldiers. Unfortunately, the cost of the Great War was so tremendous that all the countries in Europe are now very poor and none of them has been able to pay its debts. Germany has not yet paid the money demanded from her, so the French and the English and Belgian soldiers are camped in German cities, and nobody is quite sure whether Germany really cannot pay or whether she is just pretending not to be able to pay. Things are made worse by the state of Russia. Most of the Russian people are

countrymen, working hard on the land, and even now very few of these Russian peasants can read or write. Peasants never care very much who their rulers are, so long as they are allowed to go on ploughing and sowing and reaping. But after the Russian Revolution in 1917, and after the Emperor of Russia had been killed, a few determined men set up a government in Russia that was different to any government that any other country had tried before. I am afraid you would hardly understand what this " Soviet " Government, as it is called, really is. Russia's new rulers say that they want all the people to be happy and prosperous, but if anyone disagrees with them, he is almost sure to be killed, and, as these new rulers refuse to pay the debts which Russia owes to other countries, the rulers of these other countries are naturally angry and the trouble in the world is made worse. Last year, too (1921), there was a great famine in Russia and thousands and thousands of the people died of hunger. You will feel that I am bringing my story to an end in a very worrying year. Europe is like a town in which all the houses have been knocked down, and the mess is so great that

men hardly know how to begin to clear it up. Still, because you are English boys and girls, you need not fear that a hard job will not be done, for Englishmen have always faced their difficulties cheerfully and have never been frightened however hard the task before them. Life in this country has been made hard by the high cost of food, and when food is dear it is natural that workmen should want more wages, and it is difficult for masters to pay high wages when they cannot sell things made in English factories to foreign countries, because those foreign countries are too poor to buy. You see what a muddle the whole thing is. But the muddle is already being straightened out, and, as I said when I finished *The Child's Book of France*, I believe that during your lifetimes the peoples of the world will be moving towards a new and better world in which the common people will have a real chance of happiness and contentment.

Since the war, England has had great trouble both in India and in Ireland. There have been fighting in Ireland and riots in India, but the English people have decided that Ireland must now govern herself and settle her own troubles,

and that the Indians must be taught by the English how to make their own laws, so that, in a few years' time, they may also be able to govern themselves without the help of England at all.

If I have told my story properly, when you have finished reading my book you will all be very glad that you are English boys and girls. You will be glad, not because England is rich, not because the Duke of Wellington beat Napoleon at Waterloo, not even because our English ships beat the Germans at the battle of Jutland. You will be glad because our country has always been the home of brave men who loved laughter and honest dealing, who were kind to their neighbours, and who could not endure life without liberty and freedom. You will think of Robin Hood, in Sherwood Forest; you will think of the sturdy English bowmen winning the battles of Crécy and Agincourt; you will think of the Devonshire sailors who went round the world with Francis Drake and who sailed their little ships against the great Spanish Armada, never doubting that they would win; you will think of the

brave men and women, both Roman Catholics and Protestants, who were burnt alive rather than deny their faith during the Tudor persecutions; you will think of Cromwell's grim Roundheads, hard men but brave, zealous in faith and unconquerable in battle; you will think of young General Wolfe, dying after beating the French outside Quebec, and of the great Nelson, mortally wounded but happy on board his ship the *Victory*, because he knew that he had saved England from Napoleon; you will think of Florence Nightingale, a frail Englishwoman, enduring the horrors of the Crimea to care for wounded English soldiers; you will think of General Gordon facing death alone and unafraid at Khartoum; and then you will think of the Englishmen who went away from England to die in the Great War, among them the fathers and the uncles and the brothers of some of the children who will read this book, and, as you think of them, you will be proud that they were such splendid sons of our glorious mother England, and you will feel, young as you are, that they were of the same breed as the bowmen of Crécy and the sailors who smashed the Armada.

And when you think of England, do not forget the men who have given England her real greatness—Shakespeare and Milton and John Bunyan, the tinker, and Wordsworth and Shelley and Keats and Tennyson and Thackeray and Dickens—and the men who have spent their lives in fighting disease and in finding out all the truth about this earth of ours so that our lives may be happier and fuller. And then let me tell you that there are giants too in our day, great writers, great men of science, great inventors, all eager to serve England, so that the England which will be yours when you are grown up may be a brighter and a happier England than the England which is yours now that you are boys and girls.

THE END

CENTRAL CIRCULATION
CHILDREN'S ROOM